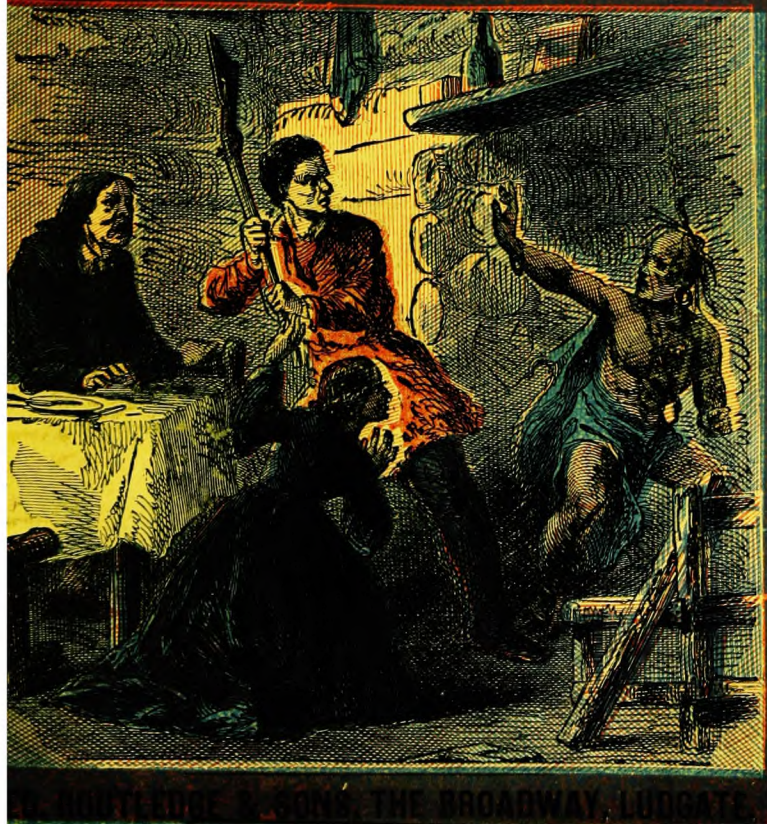


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**THE
HUNTER'S CABIN**



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LONDON :
GEORGE ROUTLEDGE AND SONS,
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THE HUNTER'S CABIN.

CHAPTER I.

AN INCIDENT OF THE FOREST.

"The trees are stained with colors of all hues :
The maple blazes in the morning sun, the stalwart oak
Flaunts crimson dashes midst the leaves of green,
The beech flares yellow, and the graceful elm
Purples and flashes in its royal robes.
The ash shakes out its scarlet berries to the breeze,
And the wild grape turns its frosted clusters to the sun.
The evergreens alone retain their summer garb ;
The velvet moss which cling to those old trunks,
Have changed their sober grays to rainbow dyes ;
And the stern rocks, of late so bare and cold,
Grown warm, and wrapped themselves in lichens gay.
A silvery mist infects the atmosphere,
Hangs o'er the shadowy lake, creeps up the stately hills,
And, changing to purple as it winds adown the vale,
Hovers a moment on the horizon's bounds,
And then pales into nothingness."

THE Indian summer, that most pleasant and delightful season of the year, had commenced. All day the green hills, the somber woods, flecked here and there with the leaves of bright yellow or red, that twinkled like eyes of fire among the branches, and the shimmering river, were wrapped in that peculiar, smoky atmosphere which seemed borne thither from some great conflagration. The sky was as blue as the azure of Italy, except in the horizon, where a few clouds, like aerial snow-drifts, rested languidly, as if they had floated there for ages. The broad, rolling Ohio was as smooth as a mirror, save when the paddle of some canoe sent the tiny circles eddying from shore to shore, or some fish lunged above the surface with his scales flashing in the sunlight like burnished silver. Now and then, some huge box-like flat-boat came drifting silently downward, the long guiding-oars resting

lazily in the water, unrippled by the passage of the vessel. A delicious languor pervaded every thing, and nature, animate and inanimate, beneath the mild noon-day sun seemed lulled to repose.

Several miles back from the Ohio, in the midst of a clearing, stood a common settler's cabin, such as were beginning to dot the wilderness in many places, at the time of which we write. It was two stories, or, more properly, one story and a half in height, made of ponderous logs, with one door of "puncheon" slabs, which, when closed, was impregnable against the efforts of man to open it. Several loop-holes were visible in the upper story, and a glance would have shown any person that the hand which had constructed the cabin had not been insensible to the dangers which might menace it. The clearing in front of the house showed that it had been turned to account, for a goodly harvest of vegetables and domestic productions had been gathered from it, and the rich virgin soil needed but be tasted to prove that inexhaustible richness lay within it. An air of thrift and comfort pervaded the cabin that would have made it a welcome sight to any wanderer who might chance upon it.

The inmates of this cabin were but two in number—Sylvester and Annie Stanton. The former was a man about forty-five years of age, dark-haired, heavy-browed, strong-limbed and muscular. An inveterate hunter, he possessed all the skill, daring and peculiarities of that class. He spent days in wandering through the woods with no companion save his dog and gun, sleeping by his lonely camp-fire with no roof but the blue canopy of heaven, with no sentinel but his faithful brute. Miles and miles he wandered off in pursuit of the deer, oblivious to the peril that threatened both himself and his child. Ten years before he had emigrated to this spot with his young wife and lovely child, both of whom he loved with the fondest affection. Cheered by them, and with the pleasant consciousness of his responsibility, the cabin rose rapidly under his hands, the space around it was cleared and put under cultivation; and the settler in his forest-home envied the happiness of no man in the broad world, for he was contented and happy himself.

But, a few years later, the beloved partner of his joys was

taken from him. He buried her in the woods, whose shadowy ~~waves~~ he loved so well, and, for many a day, he moistened the earth above ~~her~~ with his tears. From that hour, Sylvester Stanton was a changed man. From the merry, genial-hearted wood-chopper, whose laugh chimed with the ringing of his ax, as he swung it aloft, and sunk its keen blade into the solid trunk of the oak, he became the silent, moody hunter, whose home was the woods, and who loved naught beside them save his child and dog.

Annie Stanton was about eighteen years of age, the image of what her mother had been before her. Her figure was graceful but rather *petite*. Her hair was of a light brown; her eyes full and of a deep blue; her nose small and slightly Roman, and her teeth as white and smooth as pearls. Her complexion was as rich and luxurious as the crimson side of a peach. Her hands and feet, so symmetrically moulded, would have set a sculptor in rapture.

About ten miles distant, on the banks of the Ohio, was a thriving settlement, which, at the time our narrative commences, had attained a considerable size. It boasted of its tavern, school-house and church, and was quite a resort for travelers in that neighborhood. No flat-boat went down the river without tying to for a while at the "wharf," and its name was the same as one of the most ancient and celebrated cities of the East.

For several years it had been the habit of Annie Stanton to remain in the village during the winter months, where she received the benefit of the school and the best "society" of the place. Through the summer, she remained with her father in his cabin, superintending his household arrangements, frequently walking to the village and back again and not infrequently receiving visits from her friends who dwelt there.

It was near noon. Annie stood at the door, talking with her father, who had just completed his arrangements for starting out upon one of his hunts. His rifle was slung over his shoulder, his bullet-pouch and powder-horn hanging at his side, while Lion, a large, powerful and intelligent dog, sat at his feet, looking up in the face of the daughter as if to remind her that there was no necessity of prolonging the interview by any more words. Annie, as she gazed fondly in her

parent's face, seemed loth to have him depart, and he still lingered, willing that she should yet delay him a few minutes more.

"When may I expect you back, father?" she asked, laying her hand on his huge, brawny shoulder.

"Not before two days at least, and it may be that I shall be absent for nearly a week."

"Why, what will detain you that long?"

"You see it is a beautiful season for hunting, and this Indian summer will not last long. So I must improve it, my child, while I have the opportunity. You're not afraid to remain here alone?"

"Afraid? No, no; I have been left alone too often."

Stanton hung his head as if musing upon something.

"If I thought the least danger threatened you, nothing in the world would induce me to leave the cabin for an hour. But, it seems to me there can be no cause for fear. The Indians are on good terms with the whites, and there lives not a red-man who has ever applied at my door to be turned away. There surely can be no danger hanging over us."

"Of course not; do not think of it. I expect a visit from some of the girls down at the village this afternoon or to-morrow, and, as I shall return their call, I promise myself some pleasure while you are gone."

"I have no doubt you will enjoy yourself. You have a rifle and plenty of ammunition, and," added the father with a smile, "I guess you know how to use *that* weapon."

"I should think I had proved to you that I do, when I brought down that bear at the spring last autumn, who appeared to have no fear at all of me."

"Besides I am going to leave Lion to watch over you."

"Let me beg of you, father, not to do it. You need him while hunting, and he is too great a help for you to spare him without cause. What do I want of him?"

"I think you would feel safer with some companion, and that is why I offered him to you."

"I will feel just as safe without him."

"I will take him along with me then. Should any thing happen," added the parent, after a moment's pause, and in a lower tone, "you know what to do. Fasten the door, and

stand it out until I return. Fire your gun occasionally, and if I am not further away from you than I expect to be, I shall hear it and will lose no time in returning."

"Why, father, you talk as if you really did suspect something. What is it? Do not keep me in ignorance."

"Does my little girl suppose I would keep *any thing* from her?" asked the parent, in a reproving tone. "Does she think I would leave her at a time when any thing like danger threatened?"

"No, no; but then you talk so strangely, and you look so troubled, that I can not help noticing it. You have been in such good spirits during the last few days, that I do not want to see you become different."

The father smiled. Placing his hand upon the head of his child, he said :

"You must not be too apprehensive. I think it would be a good idea, if you do not feel perfectly at ease here, to go down to the village and remain there until I call for you."

"There is hardly any need of that, I guess, as you know I shall soon go there to remain during the winter. Have no fear of me, and do not let me keep you any longer, for I see Lion is getting impatient already."

The father stooped and kissed his daughter, and then turned and walked across the clearing, with his dog prancing and frolicking beside him, while the daughter watched him until he was hid from sight by the trees and undergrowth. Then she turned and busied herself with her household duties. She had eaten an early dinner, and was now occupied for a few moments in clearing away the remains, after which she brought her wheel forth, and taking a seat by the door, employed herself with spinning.

The monotonous hum of the wheel, the regular motion of the foot-board, and the task made easy and light by the skillful fingers employed at it, imparted a dreamy yet pleasant feeling, and it was not long before Annie Stanton yielded to the mood and was lost in a reverie which rendered her unconscious of place and time.

First she thought of her expected company from the village, a couple of girls of about her own age, some distant relation to her, with whom she remained when sojourning through the

winter at the settlement. And she counted greatly upon the pleasure their visit would give. She intended to have a ramble through the woods with them, and perhaps would heed the suggestion of her father, and return to their homes until he should call for her. Annie Stanton was a girl naturally imbued with a deep religious feeling, and the happiest moments of her life were those when she sat thus alone communing with herself and her Maker. She was a member of the church in the village, and unless some storm prevented, was rarely, if ever, absent from the Sabbath-day service. She was meek and modest in her deportment, and was known in the village as a "sweet girl,"—an expressive deal when said by every villager of both sexes.

As she sat spinning, she accompanied the buzz of the wheel by her own voice, singing in subdued tones parts of familiar hymns, sometimes repeating the same verse over and over again, hardly conscious of what she was doing. Then she would pause, reflecting a moment on her lonely situation, and lift up her heart to God in earnest prayer for a few moments; then resume her singing again. Gradually other thoughts occupied her mind—thoughts that, even as she sat there alone by the door of her own cabin, brought the crimson glow to her cheek, and the sparkle to her blue eye. She was thinking of an acquaintance she had formed in the village during the preceding winter in a young hunter, or, more properly, a soldier, stationed at a post some miles to the south. He had piloted a flat-boat down to the settlement, where he had disembarked and remained several days, during which she had met him. He was a frank, genial-hearted fellow, exactly, she thought, what her father must have been when a young man. His name was George Ferrington. He was known to several of the villagers, all of whom spoke in praise of his fearlessness, skill and modesty. As duty called him away, he was unable to tarry for any length of time at the settlement, but he remained long enough to form an affection for Annie Stanton; and although it had not yet been confessed, enough advance in the sweet campaign of love's passion had been made to awaken in her own breast longings for another than a father's love. She gave him an invitation to visit her at the wildwood—an invitation he was but too eager to accept.

He was heartily welcomed by Mr. Stanton, and remained several days at the cabin. The two hunted together; and Stanton, after his departure, pronounced him a "fine hunter and a man who was always welcome to his house." This was gratifying in the highest degree to Annie, who felt that she could never have an acquaintance of which her father disapproved. Her invitation for him to repeat his visit was cordial, while his acceptance was equally frank. Thus, in this case, the course of true love was running as smoothly as fond hearts could wish.

The sun had reached the meridian and passed it, and was an hour or two on the decline; still Annie Stanton sat and mused. She would probably have remained thus until night-fall had she not suffered an interruption. Her eyes were resting mechanically upon that part of the floor covered by the sunlight which streamed in through the door, when it was darkened by a shadow—a grotesque and hideous shadow. She sprung from her seat to behold an intoxicated Indian, steadying himself as best he could, and glaring in with a drunken leer upon her. He was dressed like a common Indian, and was in his war-paint, or a part of it, for, by some means or other, it had become partly rubbed from his face. He rested a beautifully ornamented rifle against the door, while he engaged both hands in maintaining the upright position. In his belt was a knife and tomahawk, and five scalps hung from his girdle, the hair long, black and wiry showing that none of them had been torn from the head of a white person. His features, despite his repulsive plight, were even and handsome for an Indian, while his form was as symmetrical and graceful as it is possible for the human form to be. His eyes were as black as midnight, and, when in his right mind, were as bright as diamonds; but their light was now obscured—they were vacant of all expression.

He stood, swaying slowly backward and forward, hiccuping, and endeavoring to concentrate his gaze upon the girl before him, before the latter was aware of his presence. Then, as if startled from a dream, she sprung up and exclaimed:

"Heavens! who are you?"

"Me—me is a great chief—big Injin," he answered, as he managed to blink at her, having succeeded in directing his

gaze, much the same as an infant manages in time to fix its look upon the candle.

"Where did you come from?" asked Annie, hardly conscious for the time of what she was doing.

"Where come from, eh? Come from good ways—on war-path—got plenty scalp—take yours, mebbe!"

Annie retreated a step or two at this dreadful hint, endeavoring to collect her thoughts in order to decide upon some course of action. It frequently happened that the Indians halted at the cabin; she had thus met with a great number, all of whom she remembered, or was remembered by them; but, she had no recollection of having seen this savage before, and was certain that he must be a stranger. Her first project was to approach him and shove him from the door and fasten him out; but she gave up the idea after a moment's thought. There was danger in approaching him while in his present mood, although she was too brave a girl to be deterred by this. She understood the Indian character too well, however, to show any rudeness, or to insult him. He would never forget it, but, beyond question, would endeavor to avenge it; while, if she was kind and considerate, intoxicated as he was, he would never fail to remember the kindness; and unless actuated by some grievance at the hands of the whites, he would prove a firm and faithful friend. Such was Indian nature.

"What is your name?" she asked, still keeping her distance.

"Me Huron—great warrior—Oonomoo."

She reflected a moment, but could not recollect ever having heard the name.

"Are you hungry?"

"Dry—want drink—want fire-water, rum, whisky—die if don't get it. Got any for Oonomoo? Take scalp if don't give him some."

Annie's heart was in her throat. She knew at that moment that there was standing in the next room (her own bedroom) a bottle of Madeira wine which had been in the house ever since her mother's death. She could not deceive the Indian without telling a falsehood; still, she was resolved that he should not have it. He was already drunk, and the wine would only render him crazy.

"Got any fire-water? Git him quick."

"I will see," she replied, moving into her bedroom. The instant she caught sight of the bottle, she opened a small window over her bed, which was ordinarily closed, so as to be as impregnable as the logs themselves, and threw it out. She heard it strike a stone or stump, and the crack and jingle of glass proved that its contents were irrecoverably gone. Then she came back and confronted the Huron, who stood patiently blinking and waiting for his "fire-water."

"Where is he?" he asked, seeing that she did not hand it to him.

"There is not a drop in the house," she replied.

"Big lie—fetch him out—take scalp if don't," he exclaimed, rising to the upright position, seemingly from the force of the words he uttered.

"I tell you the truth when I say there is not a drop in the house. If you do not believe me, search for yourself."

It required several minutes before the intoxicated savage could fully comprehend the whole force of this answer, but it gradually worked its way through his skull, and he evidently reached the conclusion that he was in rather a poor condition just then to take upon himself the task of searching the house. The frank offer of Annie convinced him, too, that she had spoken the truth, and he made no more demands for "fire-water."

"Would you like something to eat?" she asked, a few minutes later.

The Huron answered in the affirmative by a nod so vigorously made that he barely saved himself from falling forward on his face. He then stumbled in the door, and aimed for a chair, into which he dropped, much in the same manner as if some one had held him aloft and dropped him in it.

"Fetch sunken to eat," he said, in his sullen, emphatic tones.

Annie was already busily engaged in doing so, and in a few moments she had their humble table prepared, and sitting a chair by it, she overcame her repugnance sufficiently to help the staggering Indian to it.

"Ain't gal hungry? Eat with Oonomoo," said he.

"No, I ate dinner only a few minutes ago. I could not eat a mouthful," she answered, speaking the literal truth.

The savage instantly fell to work, and ate as voraciously as a wild beast for a while. Annie was very attentive to him, pressing upon him different articles of food, until he was gorged, and was forced to decline any thing more. She then assisted him away from the table, and immediately busied herself in removing the dishes and the remains of the food.

"White gal kind to Injin," said the Huron.

Annie was pleased, for she felt that she had made an impression upon the heart of the poor savage.

"I am no kinder than I ought to be," she replied.

"Very kind—very kind—very kind," muttered the savage, slowly to himself.

"Where did you get your strong drink?" she asked, feeling less and less fear of him.

"Got him down to the village—Dutchman give him to me—make fool of Injin—give Oonomoo jug."

"Where is the jug?"

"Tumble over log and smash it—run over ground—smell strong—tried to pick him up—slip through fingers."

"Do you like the drink that takes away your senses?"

"Hate him—like drunk come, dough—stir debbil up in Oonomoo—feel queer—like to scalp white gal."

A shiver of apprehension ran through Annie as the partially sobered Indian glared like a ferocious beast at her. She began to fear that, as the effects of the liquor passed off, the demon nature of the savage would enter, and she would be in greater danger than ever. He being a total stranger, the poor girl knew not what designs he might entertain against her, but she did realize how completely she was in his power. He professed to be a Huron, and he undoubtedly was. This nation—which, two hundred and fifty years ago, was one of the most numerous and powerful on the North American continent—was, at the time of our narrative, completely broken and scattered, a fragment only remaining in the vicinity of Detroit. Annie, therefore, judged that her visitor was from that section.

"Have you ever been at Detroit?" she asked.

"Been dere offen—lib dere once—don't lib dere now."

"Where do you live?"

"In de woods—all over—go where please—Oonomoo ain't fraid nobody—take scalp when want to—take yours, mebbe."

"Why would you take mine?" asked Annie, in a calm voice.

"Got long hair—like Injin—come off."

"Is Oonomoo such a warrior that he takes the scalp of women, and of those who have fed him?"

This question cut the Huron like a dagger. He really had entertained no intention of violence toward the girl, but he had been just maudlin enough to be rambling and heedless in what he said; but, this direct question had considerably sobered him. He looked intently at Annie a moment, and then said:

"Oonomoo sleepy—like to sleep."

"Let me get you a blanket," said she, moving away to her room.

"Don't want none—sleep on floor," he replied, getting down and over on his back, with about as much preparation as a horse would use in lying down. Annie insisted upon his using a pillow, at least, but he would not, and with his head upon the bare floor, in a few minutes he was sound asleep.

It was now about the middle of the afternoon, and Annie began to reflect seriously upon her situation. She was alone with a drunken Indian in the house. It was not to be supposed that he would awaken before night, when she believed the crisis of her peril would be upon her. She had thought, up to the last few minutes, that her kindness to him had had some good effect; but the broken sentences which he had uttered when partially sobered filled her with the most dreadful apprehensions. There must be evil designs in his heart, or he never would have spoken as he did.

Her eyes rested upon the rifle, hanging against the wall. Nothing would have been easier in the world than for her to take it down and shoot the sleeping Indian, and yet nothing was further from her intentions. The bare thought was revolting. It was cold-blooded murder, and Annie Stanton was a girl who, resolute as she was, could never raise her hand against a fellow-creature, unless it was absolutely

required in self-defense. She might have retired to her room, barricaded the door, and kept the savage from reaching her; but, after a moment's reflection, she decided against doing this. Were he so disposed, he might fire the building, and thus destroy her.

The only plausible plan that offered itself was for her to step quietly out of the door, and make her way to the village. The harvest moon would give all the necessary light when the sun went down, and she was too well acquainted with the path to experience any difficulty in finding the way. The Indian had lain down directly across the door, so that she could neither shut it, nor pass out without stepping over him. She supposed that in sleep the Huron would become perfectly sober, and knowing how wakeful was the slumber of his kindred, she dreaded to make the least movement, fearful that he would spring up and assault her.

As the sun went down, and the twilight gathered over the clearing, and the bright, round harvest-moon rose above the wilderness, Annie still maintained her seat in the middle of the room, still too apprehensive to attempt her escape. As she looked out in the clearing, she felt as though she would give worlds, did she possess them, to be there. How quick she would fly across it, and speed through the woods to the settlement! She was only prevented by that dark shadow which lay across the doorway. The moonlight, shining full upon his painted features, softened their forbidding expression, and gave him the appearance of a corpse, and for such he might have been taken, had not the regular rise and fall of his breast shown that he was breathing. Now and then he moved his hand uneasily, or a limb twitched, and once or twice his lips moved, as though his sleep was broken and disturbed.

Annie watched for several hours, until the moon had risen so high that the shadow had crept nearer and nearer the door, and the sleeping Huron was enveloped in its obscurity. She did not deem it prudent to attempt to pass over him, feeling certain that he would awaken and seize her. Her imagination had now become so acutely alive, that it seemed as if she would die if he touched her. Once, indeed, she arose, with the half-formed resolve of springing over him, and speeding

across the clearing ; but, at that instant, the Indian started in his sleep, and she cowered back in her seat, fearful that the beating of her own heart would awaken him.

As the hours progressed, she became aware that a drowsiness was stealing over her, and that ere long she would be compelled to succumb to it. Then came the question : Would the Indian sleep until morning ? Suppose he should awaken while she slept ? What then ?

She debated a while with herself, and, at last, resolved to go to her own room, and retire as usual, leaving her safety wholly in the hands of Providence. She believed if the Indian meditated her death, he would find means to accomplish it sooner or later. She, therefore, resolved to do nothing until the critical moment arrived. She arose, passed lightly over the floor, pushed the inner door softly open, and entered her apartment. It had always been her custom to read a chapter in her Bible before retiring ; she now paused, undetermined whether to omit this duty or not. She debated but a moment, however. Taking the candle, she passed to the family room where the Huron was lying, where, blowing a coal into a blaze, she lit it, returned to her room, and sat down. By accident, her Bible opened to that sublime Psalm, the one hundred and fourth. She had often read it, but never had its grandeur and beauty so impressed her as then. Twice it was read through, and some of the passages were dwelt upon until the pious mind had committed them to memory. She felt indeed that God's protecting care was over her—that, great as was her peril, she was safe. Extinguishing the light, and kneeling by the bedside, she poured forth her soul in prayer. Had she then heard the approach of the savage, she would not have arisen from her knees until that prayer was ended.

The faith in an all-powerful and all-merciful Father in some beings seems to be perfect. Happy is he who is so constituted, whose reliance can not be shaken by disaster or death, who trusts Him implicitly, convinced that, whatever betides, He "doeth all things well." Such was Annie Stanton. Arising from her knees, so assured was she of Providence watching over her, that she neglected the simple expedient of securing the door which divided the two apartments. For a moment,

her gaze rested upon the window above her bed. The thought that she might escape through it caused her to examine it with that view. It proved to be too narrow, however, and she lay down, scarcely disappointed that her egress by the window was impossible. In a few moments she was asleep.

In the midst of a dreamless slumber, she was awakened by a noise of some one pounding. Recollecting her situation, Annie arose to a sitting position and listened. The pounding continued, and she became satisfied that the Indian was striking her door. Her first impression was that he was endeavoring to force an entrance, and she looked wildly about in the dark for some means of defense. But, as the noise continued she noticed that it sounded as if he was knocking in order to attract her attention. There were three blows in quick succession and then a pause such as a traveler would make at the door of an inn. Quelling her agitation as much as possible, Annie asked :

"Who is there?"

"Oonomoo—want to see white gal."

"The door is not fastened."

"Oonomoo *Injin—Huron warrior*—don't go in wimmin's rooms—want to see white gal—come out here—won't take scalp."

Whether this was but a device of the Indian's, of course our heroine could not tell, although she strongly suspected that it was. Be that as it might, but one course was left—to obey the summons. Groping her way across the room she picked up the candle, and, uttering a short prayer, opened the door to confront the savage.

The Huron had slept off the effects of the liquor, and now stood perfectly sobered. Tall, symmetrical and majestic, he was a magnificent spectacle of the physical man. Annie felt that he could crush her like a reed. Just enough moonlight penetrated the room for her to discern him. Before she was aware of it, his hand was placed upon her head.

"Won't hurt you—good gal—kind to Oonomoo," said he, in a voice at once soft and cheering.

Annie felt reassured at once. The Indian took her hand, and leading her to the door, where the moonlight revealed both as plainly as if at noonday, he said :

"What name?"

"Annie Stanton."

"Good name—good gal—Oonomoo friend—live—die for you."

"I knew you would not hurt me," she said, looking up in his face.

"Oonomoo get drunk—debbil get in him—dunno what do—Dutchman make him so—Oonomoo get bad—nebber hurt Annie Stanton dough—*die* for her!"

"I do not want you to do that, Oonomoo, but I want you to be a friend to all the white people."

"Oonomoo is dere friend—nebber take *dere* scalp—fight for 'em always."

"Whose scalps then do you take?"

"Shawnees'—dey kill Oonomoo's squaw and pappoose—white men use him good—Moravian missions kind to him."

"They will always be kind to you if you are kind to them."

"Bad place here," said the Huron, referring to the location of the house. "Injins catch scalp."

"The Indians are all our friends, Oonomoo."

"*Forgit friends sometimes*," said the savage, in a meaning voice.

"I guess not," replied Annie, cheerfully. "We are always kind to the red-men, and they will never harm those who have been kind to them, will they?"

"Kind to *all* Injins?" asked the savage.

"Kind to all that have ever come to our dwelling," she replied.

"All hain't come here, den—all Shawnees dunno you."

Annie began to comprehend his meaning.

"You mean to say, that there are those who have never seen us, who may come this way and harm us?"

"Dat's him—dat's him."

"But, can not we treat them kindly, and make them friends, too?" she asked, forced to smile in spite of herself.

"Come in war-paint—burn house—take scalp—won't give you chance to make friends."

"Are not the settlers and Indians on good terms? They

have been for several years, and I have heard nothing of any new troubles."

"Shawnees bad—want scalp all time—white gal alone here?"

"No; I have a father who is frequently with me. He is now absent on a hunt."

"Can walk to de village—t'rough de wood?"

"I often do so, and think nothing of it. It is only a moderate walk."

"Better go dere—stay dere, too—Shawnee come dis way 'fore long—can't go den."

"Do you mean, Oonomoo, that we are on the eve of another Indian war—that the red-men will visit us with their knives and tomahawks?"

"Dat what Oonomoo mean—come soon, too. When fadder come back?"

"Not for several days, I suppose, as he has gone on a long hunt. Can I not wait until he returns?"

The Huron looked thoughtful a moment, and then replied:

"Shawnee on war-path now—git dis way soon—may be afore he git back—what do den?"

"I can not tell. I think I will go to the village to-morrow, so as to avoid any thing that can happen like that."

"Scart to go alone t'rough de woods?"

"Not at all. It will not take me long."

"When sun gets up, Oonomoo must be on war-path—'way off toward de Big Water. Can't stay longer."

The Huron stepped out in the clearing, and, adjusting his knife and tomahawk so as to be ready to depart, he turned back again toward Annie.

"Drunk Injin come here last night—no Oonomoo—*dis* am Oonomoo!" and he proudly turned his majestic figure toward her. "Nebber see Oonomoo drunk agin."

"I hope not, for it only hurts yourself."

"So Moravian missions say—won't do it agin—Oonomoo come back agin to see his friend purty soon—fight for her—die for her."

He turned as he spoke and walked as lightly and stealthily as a panther across the clearing. His head was bent forward

in the attitude of intense attention, a habit that had come to be a second nature with him, while he trailed his rifle, as if he expected each second to call it into use. Annie watched him, as he glided like a phantom from her, until his form was hid in the shadow of the wood, when she closed and fastened the door of her cabin and again retired to her room.

CHAPTER II.

THE SHADOW OF COMING EVENTS.

Hush ! their tramp is in the valley,
And they hem the forest round.—G. P. MORRIS.

IN the preceding chapter we have made mention several times of the village—from which the cabin of Stanton was about ten miles distant—and we have referred to the tavern of this same village as one of its most important institutions. It was an ordinary building, two stories in height, distinguishable only by a sort of porch, and its sign. The latter had been brought by its proprietor from the East. In addition to the name, "Traveler's Rest," it was graced with a representation of the Father of his Country. The sign hung from a post at one end of the porch, and on wintry nights its dismal creaking, as it swung to and fro, could be heard nearly through the entire settlement. On the porch were several rough, home-made chairs, at the disposal of all who chose to use them ; and the tavern was considered as indispensable to the welfare of the village as was either the church or the school-house.

As is always the case, it had its habitual loafers—men who were to be found there at all times during the day and evening, save when they were at home for their meals ; and who, were it not for their frugal wives, would have starved. They would manage to get hold of enough currency to obtain several drinks through the day, while they calculated upon imbibing as often at the expense of others ; and thus cked out an

existence which, to them, could have had no earthly satisfaction save in the indulgence of a beastly habit.

On the noon of the day succeeding the incident we have detailed in the first chapter, quite a crowd was collected on the porch of the Traveler's Rest. The noonday meal had just been finished; it was the custom for the guests to congregate for a half-hour or so, in order to chat and gossip together upon the affairs of the village and the country at large. The most notable character in the company was Hans Vanderbum, who, as he is to play a prominent part in our story, shall be introduced to the reader. He was about thirty years of age, fat, elephantine, lazy, good-natured and harmless. He was moreover a most devoted lover of Annie Stanton. He had been a year in the village, and, during the preceding winter, had met and loved her. He lived with a thrifty, frugal brother, who was kind enough to support and take care of him, while he had abundant leisure to lounge at the tavern and meditate upon his passion. Like most Dutchmen, he was an inordinate smoker and drinker, and at almost any hour of the day, could be seen seated at one end of the porch, luxuriating in his huge meerschaum, his face half-obsured by the volumes of smoke that were almost constantly pouring from his mouth.

The distance to the house of Stanton being something less than a dozen miles, it was too great a feat for Hans to accomplish, and Annie was thus saved much annoyance from her plethoric lover; but so sure as she undertook to visit the village, so sure was she to encounter him. No rebuff could silence his importunities, and no treatment divert his attention from her. The whole village was acquainted with Hans Vanderbum's passion, not the least amusing peculiarity of which was the certainty, upon his part, that it was fully returned by Annie Stanton, in spite of her contradictory words and actions in his presence. When rallied upon it, he was sure to reply that matters were moving along as well as it was possible, and that before a year had passed he intended to marry the lady of his choice.

"Well, Hans, when have you seen Annie last?" asked one of the villagers, after they had exhausted a subject upon which they had been conversing.

"A long time—a long time," he replied, speaking with his pipe-stem in his mouth.

"Why don't you go and visit her?"

"Dunder and blitzen! she comes to visit *me*; 'tish a long time since I've seen her, and I'm looking for her now."

As Hans seemed to think he had spoken the truth, this self-assured answer brought a smile to the face of every one present. He sat stolid and contented, however, heeding not the expressive looks which were leveled at him.

"I hear there is another fellow, as good-looking as yourself, Hans, who is also a suitor of Annie's."

"Who's dat?" asked the Dutchman, turning short round, and confronting the speaker.

"Young Ferrington—the young man who brought a flat-boat down here some time ago."

Hans relapsed into his former position with an expressive grunt, while a gratified smile of triumph illuminated his broad features. The remark at first had startled him, but its explanation had removed all alarm. He was satisfied in regard to *that* person.

"How will you dispose of him, eh?" pursued the villager, with an intention of teasing him.

"He's dishposed of already."

"How do you mean? Dead?"

"Nix."

"Has Annie given you to understand that she prefers you?"

"Yaw, dat's him."

"When did she tell you so?"

"She looks so ven I sees her, if she doesn't say it."

"I should think she did look so," laughed the villager. "Have you had no more assurance than that?"

"Dunder and blitzen! isn't dat enough?" demanded Hans, furiously.

"The only trouble is that it's a little too much."

"Hans Vanderbum undershtands te ladies. He knows 'em. Where ish dat Ferrington chap?" he asked, after a moment's pause.

"I guess he's out at Stanton's house, enjoying himself."

"How you know dat?" demanded Hans, starting from his seat.

"I don't know it. I merely suppose so."

"I knows better, and Annie wouldn't allow him to shstay there; she likes Hans too much."

"Let's see; it must be pretty near time for her to make her appearance, isn't it? She comes to the village generally at this season of the year and remains until spring."

"Yaw; she wouldn't come if Hans wasn't here; she knows he's watching for her, and can't stay away."

"How soon do you expect to marry?"

"In te spring, I tinks pretty certain."

"Have you asked her yet?"

"Nix; I'm going to ask her next time."

"S'pose she says no?"

"No danger of any gal saying so to Hans Vanderbum," answered the lover, puffing harder than ever at his pipe.

"It's well enough to feel as certain as you do, but if you don't get those sleepy eyes of yours opened before long, then my name ain't Jake Rickey," replied the villager, stepping off the porch and walking away to his employment.

"You think then, Hans, there is no need of feeling any alarm about that Ferrington?" asked one of those who still remained to bask a while longer in the genial sunshine of the porch.

"I know it—dat is certain."

"Isn't it about time young Ferrington made us a call?" pursued the villager, turning toward his friends.

"I think it is," replied one. "He promised to make us a call some time during the autumn. It is worth a long walk to see his pleasant face and to hear his ringing laugh. I suppose he is connected with that expedition of Harmon's and that has probably delayed him."

"I saw a man from up country, some days ago, who said that Ferrington told him he should accompany it. Colonel Harmon had mustered some three hundred men, and was certain of giving those thieving red-skins a complete clearing out. Ferrington is one of his leaders."

"I hope they will succeed better than Crawford. Should the Indians get the upper hand, I believe it will fan the fires

or another insurrection that will burn along the entire border, and God knows we don't want that again. These petty wars and skirmishes that have troubled the other settlements have not reached us for several years, and I think if all are firm and determined, we may keep the savages at a respectable distance."

"The doings that have succeeded that Crawford disaster have been bloody enough, and I believe another Indian war is inevitable. I can not understand how we have escaped thus long. There has been continual fighting at other places, while we've had none worth speaking of in these parts."

"Do you remember that Huron, who was here yesterday?" asked a listener, springing up as if a startling thought had just struck him.

"Oonomoo, do you mean? Of course we remember him. He and Hans got a jug together, the Indian, of course, paying for it, and had a high time rolling round in the gutter. I think Annie Stanton would have been infatuated had she seen him then. But what were you going to say about this Indian?"

"I heard him hiccoughing something about the Shawnees coming this way and getting scalps, but I could not make much of it, as he was about as drunk as he could well be."

"If he said that, depend upon it there's something in it, although I can not understand why Oonomoo failed to speak of it when he was sober, for he is certainly a good friend to us, and hates the Shawnees with an undying hate."

"Maybe he did say something. How was it, Hans?"

"Said nothing to me."

"Nothing at all? Think a minute. Are you sure?"

"Jes' a little, he said; not much I believe."

"What was it? Let us hear."

"He said there'd be two, t'ree t'ousand Injins down here who'd get all our scalps soon. Dat was all."

"And that was plenty, I should think. We must be prepared for the worst, men; there's no telling when these devilish savages will get at their mischief. We must examine the block-house, and send out our scouts."

"We shall have warning in time, I guess; so I shall think of danger only when it is certain it menaces us."

"Yonder is young Ferrington, this very minute!"

As the speaker uttered this exclamation, a horseman appeared in the road at one end of the village, coming at a rapid canter toward the tavern. The animal was covered with foam, and panted as though he had come a long distance at the best of his speed. As the horseman drew nearer, he was recognized as young Ferrington, and from the expression of his face, all saw that he was the bearer of important tidings. With the exception of Hans, the villagers stepped down from the porch, and gathered around him, as he came up.

"What's the news?" clamored a dozen voices, looking up in his pale and troubled face.

"News enough. Colonel Harmon and all his men were drawn into ambush by an overwhelming force of Indians, and cut to pieces. I saw the Colonel tomahawked and hardly fifty men have escaped. The Indians are rising again all along the border."

"How long ago was this defeat?" asked one of the listeners in a faint voice.

"Only yesterday. We fought the devils as long as there was a shadow of a chance, but, as they were nearly all hid, it was fighting in the dark. They poured their bullets in a perfect shower upon us, and when all hope was gone a lot of us broke and took to the woods. I caught a horse and have ridden ever since to reach you in time to give you warning."

"What would you have us do?"

"Get ready for the worst. Depend upon it, the red-devils will be down in these parts before many suns. Provision your block-house, move all your valuables in it, have your families ready to move in it at a moment's notice, keep your scouts out in the woods, and make up your minds that you will all see fighting before you are a week older. I have stopped at the settlements above and they are making ready."

"Are you going remain with us?"

"Perhaps so; is Annie Stanton in the village?"

"Nix, but I expect her here pretty soon to see Hans Vanderbum," called out that personage himself from his seat on the porch.

Ferrington looked up, but he was in a too serious mood to

laugh at the remark which, at any other time, would have brought a smile to his countenance. Looking down again into the blanched, upturned faces of those who had gathered around him, he added, in a low, earnest voice :

"Yes, friends, matters look dark enough. The Indians were ripe for an outbreak, and that defeat of ours has precipitated it. We had some of the best hunters in the country in our force, and we had our scouts out, but they must have all been shot or captured, for we had no warning of our danger until it was upon us."

"We will make our preparations at once. We have an abundance of ammunition and arms, and if we are out-generated it will be our own fault."

"I must hasten away to Stanton's cabin to give him notice of the peril in which he stands by remaining where he is."

"Where ish dat you is going?" asked Hans, who heard the last words of Ferrington.

"To Stanton's house, to tell him of the danger that threatens him."

"Dere is no need of your going dere. I'll go myself, and tell her," added Hans, coming down off the porch in a great flurry of excitement.

"I will save you that trouble, my good friend," said Ferrington, turning his horse's head down the river and riding off on a gallop. Hans stood petrified with amazement and indignation at this procedure, and for a time was unable to find words to express his feelings. Then he exclaimed: "By tam, I won't shtand dat," and vigorously puffing his pipe, strode off in the same direction taken by our hero.

CHAPTER III.

AN INTERVIEW AND AN INTERRUPTION.

And from the fields of her soul a fragrance celestial ascended—
Charity, meekness, love, hope and forgiveness and patience.

LONGFELLOW.

“Who comes here, my lord?”

It was far into the small hours of the night when the Huron bade adieu to Annie, and glided across the clearing into the woods beyond. As she secured the door and returned to her room, it was already growing light in the east, and the sun was fairly up when she fell asleep again, though she had no idea that the hour was so near the morning. The sun had passed the meridian when she awoke, and, startled at her remissness, she arose to make preparations for going to the village. At a sparkling brook in the rear of the house, which came from the cold spring, she performed her ablutions; after which the fire was lit and preparations made for the noonday meal. This occupied considerable time, and it was fully an hour before she had set matters right again; so that the afternoon was considerably advanced ere she was ready to start for the village.

When ready, she stood in the door a few moments surveying the scene before her. The Indian summer being only fairly commenced, the day was precisely like the preceding one. The same smoky haze had filtered down through the tree-tops, and glimmered on the hill and river, while the rich sunshine penetrated every nook with its genial warmth. That profound stillness which seems audible from its very profoundness reigned through the great wilderness, and for a few minutes she gave herself up to the quiet enjoyment of the scene.

She had stood, indeed, but a moment, when her ear caught the clomp of a horse's hoof, and, like a frightened fawn, stepped back in the house to listen. Nearer and nearer came the regular rattling of hoofs on a rapid gallop. Soon both horse and rider shot like a shadow by the open door, and

halted at the corner of the house. The next instant the door was darkened, and young Ferrington, all aglow with excitement and expectation, stepped in, and called out :

"Why, Annie, where are you? Why don't you come to meet me?"

"Indeed, is that you, George? I thought it a stranger," she replied, coming forward in a tremor of joy.

The young man took the two extended hands, and, bending his head, imprinted a warm kiss upon the glowing lips of the girl, and then asked :

"Are you all alone here, Annie?"

"All alone."

"You are in greater danger than you imagine."

"I know that peril threatens me, but I feel assured in your presence."

"And how do you know that peril hangs over you?"

"I was told so last night by a friend."

"A friend? And who could he be?"

"A drunken Huron Indian came here and remained until he was sober, when he told me that it was best for me to return to the village."

"A Huron Indian? Was his name Oonomoo?"

"That is his very name."

"I know him well, and a truer friend to the whites never lived. He has but one failing—that of loving strong drink, at which times he is apt to be morose and dangerous. When was he here?"

"He came yesterday afternoon, and stayed till nearly morning."

"Do you know where he went?"

"Only that he was upon the war-path, and had an engagement to be in a certain place to-day, so that he could not remain longer with me."

"And your father, where is he?"

"He departed yesterday, and I believe expects to be gone for several days."

"It will not do, then, to remain until he returns."

"I am ready to go this minute. Shall we start?"

Anxious as was Ferrington to have Annie in a place of safety, he was hardly willing to break off his interview with

her so soon. He wished and intended to have a long, earnest conversation with her, and the danger of which he had come to speak was not so imminent but that he believed their departure could be deferred until the morrow without running any great risk. He had come immediately from the scene of hostilities, and, formidable as were the fires of war which had been kindled along the border, it was not within the range of probability that they would reach this section for several days.

"I think there is no necessity," he laughed, "for such hurry as that. If you are willing, I should like to remain here until morning. It is now getting well on toward night, and my horse is ready to drop from exhaustion."

"I am willing to stay here until to-morrow," answered Annie, archly, "provided you do not desert me, if we do get in danger."

"Little fear of that," said Ferrington, kissing the warm cheek of the maiden. "I will now go out and attend to my horse, and be back in a few minutes."

Annie followed to the door. He merely removed the saddle and bridle, allowing the animal full liberty.

"I think I will not tether him," said he, in answer to the inquiring look of the girl. "He is the horse which belonged to Colonel Harmon, and is so well trained that he will not wander far, and I have no fears but what he will be at hand in the morning. Now," added Ferrington, as he entered the house, "let us sit down and talk together for a while."

As he spoke, he led the blushing maid to a seat, and, taking one beside her, said:

"In the first place, how have you been since I last saw you?"

"Well, indeed. You have no idea how much I have longed for your visit. I did fear you had forgotten me entirely."

"Forget you?" repeated the soldier, in a rebuking tone, as he leaned from her and looked in her face. "*Never* will I forget you."

"That is to be seen," she said, archly, and then added, seriously: "but you have only hinted about this dreadful danger that has brought you here. Let me hear all about it."

And thereupon Ferrington proceeded to relate in a graphic manner, speaking scarcely above a whisper, the account of the awful massacre of Colonel Harmon's command. As he pictured the silent march through the wood—the lonely encampment—the profound stillness of the gorge when they entered it—the sudden explosion on every side, as if a volcano had burst up from beneath them—the iron hail that was poured from a thousand rifles upon them—the melting away of the men like wax in the fire—and the desperate charge and escape of a handful of the devoted band—as he pictured these, the cheek of Annie blanched, and she took in fully the horrors of the war that had just commenced on the frontier.

"And this being so, will the village itself escape? Could not a thousand Indians lay it in ruins, and put the people to the tomahawk?"

"They might, were the villagers unprepared; but I stopped when I came through, and gave them enough, I think, to set them to work. I told them it was morally certain they would have to fight before another week went over their heads. I believe they are putting the block-house in order, and making ready for the worst—all, perhaps, with the exception of Hans Vanderbum, who appeared to be too busily occupied with his pipe to leave it."

"And did you see him?"

"Yes; he said he expected you down very shortly to see him."

"Expect me to see him?" repeated Annie, with an expression of the most comical disgust. "I can not go to the village but he harasses me continually, and he will persist, in spite of all I can do, in saying that he and I are shortly to be married. Isn't it ridiculous?"

"It must be annoying, certainly."

"It is, and yet I can not help feeling amused sometimes at him. Just so sure as he knows I am in any house, so sure is he to make his appearance with his pipe, and manage to get to me by some means or other, and he appears sure he will gain me sooner or later."

"Perhaps he will."

"George!" Annie's voice was modulated with mingled tenderness and reproach.

"Does he ever visit you out here?"

"His love is not strong enough to impel him to the effort of such a walk. He is obliged to content himself with my periodical visits to the settlement."

"Which I suppose are frequent enough to satisfy him," said Ferrington, who was foolish enough to manifest some slight signs of jealousy of the elephantine Hans.

"Are you earnest in speaking thus?" asked Annie, seriously.

"No," laughed our hero, heartily ashamed of his petty jealousy. "Whoever I may have as a rival, I shall entertain little fear of Hans Vanderbum. How it will be in regard to others I know not. How will it be, Annie?"

"Just the same."

"Good. I love you."

"And—*I love you!*"

"Will you be my wife some day—that is, when affairs are in such a situation as to justify it?"

"Yes, if you want me."

"I do want you, indeed. So, then, I may consider you as pledged to me, may I?"

"You may. Can I consider you as belonging to me?"

"Yes, I belong to you for all time and eternity. We are affianced, then, are we not?"

"I should judge we were, if the words we have uttered were spoken in earnest."

"I never was more in earnest in my life. How is it with you?"

"Neither have I ever been more in earnest than in uttering these words that may seem to have been nothing but mere jest upon my part."

"That beats all I have ever heard!" exclaimed Ferrington, springing to his feet, with a laugh. "I don't believe there has ever been a briefer and more pointed courtship than this one of ours."

Chatting thus pleasantly, the hours flew rapidly by, and, ere they were aware, the sun had gone down, and the great harvest-moon was riding above the tree-tops. As time progressed, Ferrington drew to the door and secured it, while Annie prepared a light, and resumed their conversation. They

were too happy in each other's love to think of the wants of the body, and it was thus that both came to go without their supper.

"I can not help feeling some apprehension about father," said Annie, after quite a prolonged lull in the conversation.

"What harm can befall him, who is so experienced a hunter? Has he not been absent on many similar expeditions?"

"Yes, but you know he is not aware of these late occurrences among the Indians, and he may be so unsuspecting as to allow them to entrap him."

"Depend upon it, he is too old a hunter to be caught napping. He is not going to walk blindly into the hands of the first company of Indians he meets."

"I hope he will meet Oonomoo, who will not fail to warn him. I wish they were acquainted."

"Wish they were acquainted! Indeed, they are as well known to each other as—you and I."

"I did not know that; where did they ever meet?"

"Your father befriended the Huron once when he got in a quarrel with one of the villagers, and was set upon by several. All were drunk, and Oonomoo would have been rather badly used, if it had not been for the interference of your father."

"I am glad to hear that, for I can have no doubt now but that he is a good friend to both of us, and if we are placed in any desperate strait, we may count upon his assistance."

"That you may; the savage never forgot the timely friendship thus shown him, and he would hesitate at no sacrifice upon your parent's account."

"He expressed himself willing to die for me, I suppose because he felt grateful for the kindness I had shown him."

"He would do it, too. It is rather singular that both father and daughter have thus taken means, without the knowledge of the other at the time, to gain the everlasting friendship of this Huron."

"Do you think he will return very soon?"

"I feel pretty certain of it. There is a small company of hunters up country known as the Riflemen of the Miami, who sometimes use this Indian as their guide. I suspect he

has some engagement now with them, and will return as soon as it is fulfilled."

"George," said Annie, with a start, "I am sure there is something or somebody at this very minute prying around our house! I have heard a footstep, and a noise of some one breathing."

"Let me reconnoiter, as we say," whispered our hero, going toward the door. "You open the door softly, and I will steal out and make an observation."

"No, you will not, for there may be somebody lying in wait to shoot you. Listen a few minutes first."

Both looked in each other's face, and did nothing but breathe, and, while listening, they heard distinctly a footfall on the outside of the cabin. Ferrington stepped quickly to to the door, drew the bolt, and, ere Annie could prevent, slipped out. As he came into the clearing, he glanced about him, but could see nothing. Stealing then around the end of the cabin, he peered behind it. This portion being thrown in shadow, he experienced greater difficulty in discerning objects. It required but a glance to satisfy him that there was some one there. A huge form was standing upon a sort of platform made of stones piled on each other, and was at work at the window to which we have referred in another place, evidently in the hope of getting within the cabin. Ferrington was debating what to do, when the stones which supported the fellow tumbled apart, and he fell flat on his back, with a shock that fairly shook the cabin.

"Mine Gott! mine pipe ish proke!" was uttered in the agony of apprehension, and springing forward, Ferrington assisted Hans Vanderbum to his feet.

CHAPTER IV

THE HUNTER'S ADVENTURE.

From climes toward the rising day,
The intruders hither bent their way;
They loved the country we possessed,
Our native region of the west;
They came with murderous fire and brand,
To drive us from our fathers' land.

INDIAN SONG OF VICTORY.

DEPARTING from his cabin, Stanton struck out toward the Ohio, it being his intention to cross over to the Kentucky cane-brakes, and spend several days in hunting among them. He strode rapidly forward, hoping to reach and pass the river before the sunset. His dog trotted several yards in advance, and, with such a sagacious guide and leader, the hunter felt no apprehension of running into danger.

The afternoon passed without any thing worthy of note occurring, and, just as the sun was going down, he stood upon the "dark and bloody ground."

"I will soon be upon that dark battle-field," said Stanton, as he leaned on his rifle a moment to contemplate the scene. "Many is the day I have spent in wandering among those dangerous labyrinths, and more than once have Daniel Boone and I camped together, on the southern shore of this stream. Hold on, Lion, we must find our canoe; that is, if no one has disturbed it since we last used it, which is a good six months since."

The hunter passed carefully down the bank. After a few minutes' search, aided by his intelligent dog, who seemed to understand his object, he came upon a small clump of bushes growing so close to the water's edge that their leaves tipped its surface.

"Here, if I'm not mistaken," said he, "we'll find the very thing we want."

But he was mistaken, for, as he parted the shrubbery, and glanced among it, he made the discovery that the "very thing he wanted" was not there. In other words, some one had appropriated his canoe for himself.

"Well, it can't be helped," he continued, philosophically. "We've swum the river before, and we can do it again—"

A low whine from the dog arrested his attention. Looking at the animal, he noticed his nose pointed toward the river. It required but a glance for the hunter to discern the meaning of this action. Two large canoes, each of which must have contained thirty warriors, had just set out from the opposite shore, and, impelled by the skillful paddles of their occupants, were rapidly nearing the bank upon which he was standing. With the eye of a genuine woodsman, he decided in his mind the point at which they would land, and, withdrawing so as to be secure from observation, he awaited their approach.

"There's mischief in that movement, Lion," he whispered, crouching down and patting his dog on the head. "That's a war-party, as sure as we live, and there will be a fight before long in which they will have a hand."

Shortly after, the two canoes touched the shore simultaneously, and the agile warriors leaped upon the land, and commenced preparations for encamping, while each of the boats, propelled by a single savage, set out to return to the other side.

"What is the meaning of that?" queried the hunter, of himself. "Can it be there are more Indians to come over?"

Such proved to be the case, the canoes making their appearance in a few moments loaded as heavily as they were before.

"A formidable war-party, indeed, and all Shawnees. It can not be that a blow against any of the settlements is intended."

The thought was startling. Stanton felt uneasy for some time. None knew better than he the treacherous character of the Shawnee Indians, who were literally "a people delighting in war." If not engaged in hostilities with some neighboring tribe, they were pretty sure to be concerned in some foray against the whites, and he could but look upon this large war-party as meaning something more than usual. He had heard nothing of any new trouble with the savages, and, after considerable reflection, was disposed to believe that this might be, after all, nothing more than a move to settle some feud with a neighboring tribe.

Still, Stanton by no means felt at ease. He determined to

omit his contemplated hunt in Kentucky, and make his way home again. The situation of his daughter was too exposed to allow any danger to threaten her. He regretted greatly that he had not arranged for her to go to the village, there to await his return. If this Indian expedition was really intended to attack the settlement, it was more than probable it would be reinforced ere it had gone much further, and a portion of it be detailed to visit the isolated cabins before making the final attack. Stanton's own house, from its situation, would be one of the very first to receive such a visit.

Before setting out on his return, the hunter made a circuit of the camp-fire in order to ascertain the size of the war-party. As near as he could tell, there were fully a hundred warriors, including two chiefs. All were in their war-paint, fully armed with rifle, tomahawk and knife, and beyond a doubt were completely prepared to march against some point held by their enemies, whoever they might be. The two chiefs were recognized by Stanton, as being two of the most influential of the Shawnees, and two of the most dangerous and determined foes that the whites had. Their deeds have made them historical, for they were invincible to the whites until the resistless "Mad Anthony" vanquished them in 1794, and broke their power forever.

In addition to these, Stanton observed another Indian, known by the *sobriquet* of Jim, who had always been known as a warm friend of the settlers. His presence puzzled him greatly, and increased the half-formed belief that this formidable expedition was solely an Indian affair.

"It can not be against us," he thought. "We would have had warning were such the case, and Jim would not have turned traitor without great provocation."

"The hunter started to move away, when an almost inaudible whine from Lion placed him on his guard. Looking about him, he was unable at first to ascertain the cause of the dog's alarm, but before he could withdraw from his position, he observed an Indian approaching the very tree behind which he had concealed himself. A hasty survey of his position convinced him that a discovery was unavoidable, and without attempting it, he stepped boldly forward, and extending his hand, said :

"How do you do, brother?"

The Indian recoiled a step in genuine surprise, but instantly recovering himself took the proffered hand and returned the salutation.

"How de do, brudder?"

As he spoke, Stanton recognized his voice as that of Jim's, to whom we have referred.

"Why, Jim, I did not know you when I addressed you. I am indeed glad to see you. You have quite a large party nere."

"Yes, quite large party," replied the savage, who spoke English remarkably well.

"And all in your war-paint, too. Of course, then, you are upon the war-path?"

"Yes, upon de war-path."

"Somebody will catch it then, I'm sure, for it is about as fine a lot of warriors as I ever saw together."

"How you know we here?" asked the Indian, quickly.

"I was out hunting, and some time ago I saw your canoes cross, and had some curiosity to watch such a splendid lot of warriors."

"Where going to hunt?" asked Jim, fixing his keen eyes upon him.

"Across the river into Kentucky."

Stanton saw at once that the Indian had taken his reply differently from what he intended. Supposing he was asked where it was he *had* intended to go when he discovered the war-party, he had replied accordingly, and that his interlocutor took it for granted that such still was his intention, was proved by his next question:

"When expect to come back?"

"I started out with the purpose of being gone nearly, if not quite a week."

"Good huntin' over in Kentuck."

"I've no doubt of it. That was why I was so anxious to go there. Can you not accompany me? You know you and I have had several hunts together."

"No go now—like to much. Jim on war-path. Fight big."

"I am sure you will, for you are a brave warrior. Who are you going to attack?"

"The Delaware women that have slain one of our chiefs."

This was a transparent falsehood which Stanton understood at once, for he knew that there was no quarrel between the Delawares and Shawnees, the two tribes being the natural allies of each other. He deemed it best, however, to affect a belief of what the Indian had said, and added :

"I hope you will be successful, as I have no doubt you will, for the Shawnees are a brave people."

At this point, the hunter became sensible that other eyes than those of Jim's were watching him, and to avoid any suspicion that might attach to him, he proposed to walk forward to the camp-fire and address the chiefs. Jim led the way and introduced him as his white brother, and was obliged to act as interpreter in all that passed between him and them. They exchanged the salutations usual at such times, and it did not escape the notice of Stanton that more than one whispered consultation was held, occasioned beyond a doubt by his unexpected appearance among them. The fact, too, that the calumet was not offered him was a slight which he felt was not unintentional.

In the course of a half-hour or so, Jim said :

"When like to go hunt?"

"I would like to cross to-night."

"Got canoe, or goin' to swim?"

"I have no boat, and suppose that I must swim. I have done it before, and am not backward about trying it again."

"We take you over."

"If you can do so without trouble I shall be very glad of it," replied Stanton, who deemed it best not to offend by refusing the offer.

Jim and a companion, without further ado, walked toward the river, the former signifying to the hunter that he was to follow him. Going up the bank of the stream some distance they halted and pulled forth from its hiding-place a small birchen canoe, which Stanton instantly recognized as his own.

"Go over in this," said the Shawnee, waiting for him to step in.

"Thank you, Jim, for your kindness," said the hunter, taking his seat with paddle in hand. Lion crouched at his feet

and the next minute, the light vessel shot out from the bank toward the Kentucky shore. The moon was so bright, that he knew the canoe was plainly visible to the Indians behind until he had entered the line of shadow thrown out by the trees upon the opposite bank. Accordingly he plied his paddle vigorously, until he glided into the obscurity and was sure that no human eye rested upon his movements. The canoe then turning down stream, skimmed like a bird over the water until, judging he had gone a safe distance, he lifted his paddle from the stream, and catching an overhanging branch, held the vessel motionless.

"This means something," said he, thinking aloud. "That body of Indians would a great deal rather that I had not seen them, and Jim certainly told me a falsehood, when he said they had come over to fight the Delawares. Why did he show so much anxiety to get me on this side of the river? What reason could he have, except that of fearing I might watch their movements."

The more he reflected, the more convinced did he become that this band of Indians was an expedition against the whites. Then came the question, why, if such were the case, was he, one of the very people they were marching against, treated with such leniency? The only reason that he could give was, that he had several personal friends among the company, who had visited at his house, and been kindly treated, and who, in remembrance of this, had taken this means of getting him out the way instead of killing him. Such being the case, Stanton might have good grounds for believing that his cabin would not be disturbed; but there was no certainty of this, and even granting that there were, he felt the most painful anxiety to warn the villagers of their impending peril.

Dropping the branch, he allowed his canoe to drift further down-stream, until, judging that he was secure from observation, he shot out from beneath the shadow and sped rapidly toward the Ohio shore. He had descended the river so far that he had entirely lost sight of the camp-fire, and, as a matter of course, supposed the savages had lost sight of him.

He had nearly crossed the river, when Lion, who was crouching in front of him, rose up and gave utterance to a low whine. The hunter instantly checked the canoe, for this

was a signal that made his heart leap with apprehension. It meant that somebody was on the shore, and he was convinced that the river was being watched to prevent his return. He sat for several minutes without stirring his paddle, debating with himself upon the best course for him to pursue. Having allowed his boat to float still further down-stream, he gave it a slight impetus forward as a sort of experiment. The intelligent brute instantly rose up, gave a whine louder than before, and seemed disposed to jump overboard. At the same moment, the strained ear of Stanton heard the snapping of a twig; and, without waiting for any thing more, he instantly dipped his paddle deep in the water, and sped swiftly for the Kentucky bank. Not until he had stepped upon land, and pulled the frail vessel up after him, did he feel perfectly safe.

"That river can not be crossed to-night, that's certain," said he. "It is thoroughly watched, and if I persist in attempting it, it is not likely they will be so lenient toward me as they have been."

Retiring some distance from the shore, Stanton lay down upon the ground, and the faithful Lion, nestling down beside him, kept watch while he slept. At the earliest signs of day, he awoke, and, ascending the river, peered cautiously over toward the smouldering camp-fire of the Shawnees. A glance showed him that the main body had gone, but there were several still lingering in the rear.

"Left behind, no doubt, to watch me and prevent my crossing," reflected the hunter. "They take a great deal of pains with me, when they could have prevented it so easily last night. Never mind, my good sentinels, you will have a long beat, if you keep me in Kentucky until nightfall."

Leaving his canoe where it was, he again turned his face down-stream, determined not to attempt its passage until he was sure of accomplishing it. To make the matter certain, he traveled until nearly noon, when, adjusting his rifle to his back, he waded boldly out in the current, and, accompanied by Lion, swam over to the Ohio side.

"Here we are again," said he, speaking to the dog, "and here's the termination of our hunt. Now for home again."

Striking into the forest, he took a north-west direction, so as to strike the route by which he had come to the Ohio.

The hunter had journeyed an hour or so, when he reached a small brook, the appearance of which showed him in an instant that it was a deer-lick. The ground in many places was licked as dry and hard as a deal floor, by the tongues of the animals, and to one who did not understand the cause, it would have appeared a most singular phenomenon.

By this time, too, he was excessively hungry, and he cautiously approached the lick in the hope of gaining a shot at one of the animals. He was fortunate enough to see one almost instantly, and raising his rifle, he sent a bullet directly through its heart just as it had wheeled to flee. It proved to be a fine buck, and scarce a dozen minutes had elapsed before he had a piece toasting over a fire. He had barely tasted a mouthful, when Lion uttered a sharp bark, and looking up the hunter saw an Indian within a dozen paces of him.

"How de do, brudder?" said he, approaching, and offering his hand.

"Why, Oonomoo, is that you? There is no person I would be more pleased to meet than you," returned Stanton, grasping the hand of the Huron. "Sit down and have a piece of this buck that I have just slain."

The hunger of the red-man was equal to that of the white one, and without any hesitation he joined him in his repast. The vigor with which this was carried on for a while effectually debarred conversation; but, as the meal progressed, and their appetites become appeased, their tongues were loosened.

"Where you going, Oonomoo?" asked Stanton, taking the liberty of an old friend.

"Up river—two—t'ree—good many miles."

"On a scout with the Riflemen again?"

The Huron nodded.

"You appear to do a great deal of that. When are you to meet them?"

"When sun dere," replied the Huron, indicating a point in the sky, about twenty degrees above the horizon. "Met Dernor dis mornin', in de woods—tell me where to go—meet him dere."

"I saw a war-party of Shawnees last night."

"Where see 'em?" asked the savage, his black eyes glittering like fire.

"Along the Ohio, on this shore."

"Where come from?"

"They crossed in canoes from the Kentucky side. There were over a hundred."

"Where goin'?"

"They said they were going to punish the Delawares, who had slain one of their chiefs."

"Big lie—goin' to de settlement—to get white scalps."

"How do you know that?"

"Shawnee dig up hatchet agin—been big fight—be anoder."

Stanton felt that the Huron spoke the truth. His suspicions were realized, and the settlement indeed was in imminent danger.

"And how about my cabin—won't they pay that a visit on their way?"

"Go dere fust—carry off gal, if she dere."

"She's there! She is alone, without any knowledge of her peril!"

"No—ain't nudder," said the Huron, quickly.

Stanton looked up in surprise.

"What do you mean?"

"Oonomoo dere last night—tole gal 'bout it—she go to de village to-day—tell Oonomoo so—fine gal."

"I pray she is there this minute. Even then I can not feel she is safe, for this is a fearful company that is marching against it."

"Dey find 'em out 'fore git dere," replied the Indian, who took matters with that stoical indifference peculiar to his race.

"I wish I could feel certain that such were the case. Oonomoo, when your engagement with the Riflemen of the Miami is finished, you must come back this way, for I am sure your presence will be needed."

"Oonomoo come back, day or two—nebber forgit white brudder—help him when drunk—and got his head broke."

"Ha! ha! you will never forget that little matter. I saw they were imposing on you, and did what I could to stop it, as I would have done with any one else."

"Nice gal, daughter—Annie—use Oonomoo good—like fader."

"You speak the truth there, Huron, when you call my daughter a fine girl. Although it's her father that says it, there's not her superior west of the Mississippi, nor east of it, for that matter."

"Fine gal—Annie—nice gal—Annie," repeated the Indian, as if the repetition of the name was pleasant to him. "Oonomoo nebber forgit her—she like her fader—Shawnee touch her—Oonomoo kill him—he die for her."

"Give us your hand, Huron," said the hunter, impulsively. "If your skin be red your heart is white, and the scalp of no pale-face hangs at your girdle."

The two grasped hands, and, looking in each other's eyes, held them thus a moment. Words were not needed to seal the compact that existed in their hearts long before.

"I feel that it is my duty to arouse the settlement to their danger," said Stanton, "and every moment is too precious to be wasted."

"Can't get dere 'fore Shawnee," replied the Huron.

"Then my own daughter is lost."

"No—ain't nudder."

"I can't feel certain that she has gone to the village, and, if she has not, then she is lost certainly."

"No—ain't nudder," replied the Huron, doggedly. "She know dere Shawnee in wood—don't cotch her 'sleep."

"I understand you. You mean that if attacked she has defended herself, and will keep them at bay until assistance reaches her?"

Oonomoo signified that such was his meaning.

"She is a brave girl, and fully able to do it, if not taken at disadvantage. The cabin is so constructed that it can stand a good siege, and she will never yield so long as the least hope remains. But think of it! a score of fully-armed savages assailing a young girl! The bare thought is enough to make me crazy," exclaimed Stanton, springing up and throwing his rifle over his shoulder.

"Oonomoo be dere soon," said the Huron, also rising from the ground, and preparing to move off in the forest.

"I shall expect you whether there be danger or not. You will not disappoint me?" asked Stanton, earnestly.

"Oonomoo be dere soon," repeated the Indian, signifying

that he could make no compact stronger than his simple promise. And with this adieu he turned and sped away as noiselessly as a phantom. Standing motionless until he had disappeared, Stanton, with an anxious heart, took an opposite direction toward his own cabin.

CHAPTER V.

THE APPROACH OF DANGER.

Sons of warriors! now be strong,
Hurry to the glorious strife;
Drive the leaden showers along,
And fiercely wield the scalping-knife.

INDIAN WAR SONG.

"ARE you hurt?" asked Ferrington, as he assisted the plethoric German to his feet.

"Oh mine pipe—mine pipe, dat I brought all de way from Amsterdam, ish proke," said he, walking slowly forward with one leg stiffened, until he came into the moonlight, when he pulled forth the broken stem of his meerschaum, and contemplated it with mournful regret.

"I shmoked him five years and now he is proke. I wish I vas deat."

"But I guess it can be mended, so as to be used," said Ferrington, leading him toward the door.

"Oh!—I hopes so, I hopes so," repeated Hans, wholly taken up with his loss.

"I judge you can not be much hurt," laughed the young soldier, "or you would be more sensible of it."

Ferrington led the Dutchman into the cabin as he would have led an infant. Catching sight of Annie, Hans carefully deposited the remains of his pipe and his hat on a chair, and, while Ferrington was securing the door behind him, scraped his foot, made a low obeisance to her, and endeavored to look very sweet and winning.

"Come to my arms, my dear shweet gal," said he, holding

them out, as if he were going to grapple with some wild beast.

"No, I would prefer remaining here," replied Annie.

"Ha! ha! bashful, I see, afore *him*." Well, I doesn't plame you. You will get over it when we gets settled down in life," smiled and smirked Hans.

"I've no doubt I will when *we* get settled down," replied Annie, with a sly look at Ferrington.

"Nice house here," said Hans, rolling his eyes about him.

"This is the first time you have ever paid us a visit, I believe," remarked Annie, as the three seated themselves.

"Yaw—most too long a walk for one to take mit my delicate health; but my great love make me do it to-night."

"Were you not frightened to come alone through the woods at this time of night?" asked Ferrington.

"I shtarted early dis afternoon, and took a rest every dwo, dree hundred yards; dat what made me so late. I got ashleep, doo, down by de brook, and didn't wake up till dark."

"You saw nothing of Indians, then, I presume?"

"Notting at all. Dey might gone by ven I was asleep."

"They are rising again, and I've no doubt a desperate and bloody war will commence shortly or has already commenced," added Ferrington, with the purpose of discovering whether it was really possible to awaken any apprehension upon the part of the stolid Hans.

"Yaw, so I hears," replied the latter, stealing a glance at Annie, and then at his meerschauum, showing plainly enough what was uppermost in his thoughts.

"Perhaps the whole village will be put to the tomahawk."

"Yaw," replied the Dutchman, in the same absent manner.

"Suppose such a massacre takes place," pursued Ferrington, determined to bring him to the point, "what do you suppose will become of you?"

"I takes care of myself. I runs like dunder and blitzen when Injins comes."

This honest reply brought a smile to the face of both Annie and Ferrington, who could not resist the picture of the ponderous Hans flying before a band of fleet-footed Indian warriors. Evidently it was a vain task to play upon his fears. He would never leave the house until it was falling down

about him, nor comprehend what was meant by danger until it was upon him.

"I shpose you and Annie be acquainted," said Hans, looking straight at Ferrington, in a patronizing manner.

"I believe we are, are we not?" he asked, with a serious face, turning toward her.

She nodded assent, without venturing upon any other reply.

"I shposed so; very fine gal Annie ish."

"I agree with you there, perfectly."

"Thank you," said the girl, acknowledging the compliment from both.

"Me and her been acquainted a long time. You must come and see us when we get settled down."

"I will take great pleasure surely in doing so when that time arrives. How soon may I expect it?"

"Mit'in a year, I guesses," replied Hans, attempting to wink with one eye, but shutting both, as he looked toward Annie.

"You will win a prize, I can assure you."

"I knows dat as well as you," said Hans, in tones which meant a great deal more than the words. "Me and Annie undershtands matters, doesn't we?" he asked, with one of his winning smiles, rising at the same time and moving his chair toward her. The girl instantly changed her seat, but Hans persisted in following her, until matters assumed such a disagreeable aspect that Ferrington stepped forward with the intention of interfering; but, at this juncture, some one rapped at the door. Hans instantly started to open it, but the young man placed his hand on his shoulder, and whispered:

"Hold! there is no knowing whether that is a friend or foe."

The knock was repeated.

"Who is there?" asked Ferrington.

"A friend—the owner of the cabin."

The fastenings of the door were instantly removed, and the next moment the hunter, Stanton, stepped within. His first proceeding was to embrace and kiss his daughter, and he then turned to Ferrington, who had not forgotten to secure the door again.

"I am glad, indeed, my young friend, to see you here. I

feared greatly to find Annie alone. Ah, Hans, this is something new to see you in my house."

"Yaw, I hasn't been here in de future as much I ish going to in de past, when me and Annie settles down together."

"All well, unharmed and undisturbed, I see," said the father, drawing a sigh of relief as he looked around him. "You remain here, of course?" speaking to Ferrington.

"That is my intention, certainly."

"I will not tarry, then, at present. I must go to the village immediately, and prepare them for an expedition that is marching against them."

"To what do you refer?"

In a few words, Stanton related what has been given in the preceding chapter. At the conclusion of the recital, Ferrington said:

"There is no need of your making the journey; as I halted on my way up yesterday, I told them of all this," adding, at the same time, a brief account of his experience during the past few months.

"I am glad to hear that. It affords me unspeakable relief, as I had great reason to fear that I would be too late after all. My duty, then, lies here, in my own cabin, to defend my own child. You have told me, my young friend, that it is your intention to remain with me. How is it with you, Hans?"

"Yaw; I shtays, doo, if I can fix my pipe so as to shmoke."

"We have remained too long away from the village already. To-morrow we must set out for it, provided the path lies open, which," added Stanton, in a lower tone, "I very much doubt."

"If you think it advisable, I will reconnoiter the woods to-night," said Ferrington.

"It could do no good; it is now getting late, and perhaps it will be best for us to retire. There is no telling when we shall gain another chance for sleep, so it is best to improve the time that is given us."

"You anticipate, then, no trouble to-night?"

"I think not. Lion will stand guard, and you may depend upon it that if there is any mischief he will give us due warning. Besides, my slumber is always light."

Acting upon this hint, Annie bade them good night and withdrew to her room. Hans, after he had picked up his meerschaum, was conducted to the upper story, where, in a few minutes, he gave very audible evidence that there was little trouble pressing upon his mind. Stanton and Ferrington spread a blanket upon the floor, and lay down, while Lion took his position directly in front of the door. And in these several situations, the inmates of the hunter's cabin went to sleep.

As the hunter had remarked, his slumber was generally very light, and, on the present occasion, his nerves were so disturbed that, without any other apparent cause, he awoke after having slept some three or four hours. As he opened his eyes, he looked about him, and saw Ferrington and Lion still undisturbed, from which he felt certain that he himself had been awakened by no noise upon the outside of the cabin. He knew by the waning light that it was beyond midnight, and with the expectation of remaining awake until morning, he raised his head on his hand, resting his elbow on the floor, and gazed listlessly at his dog, whose nose reposed between his paws, and whose position by the door had not been changed since lying down.

Stanton had gazed at the brute some fifteen or twenty minutes, with that peculiar, absent expression assumed by one when in a brown study, and he was gradually relapsing into a drowsiness again, when Lion suddenly raised his head in the attitude of acute attention. The hunter's ear had caught no sound, but he, too, listened attentively in the certainty of hearing it. A moment later, the dog arose, and placing his nose at the bottom of the door, snuffed several times, then resumed his position on the floor and uttered a low whine.

"What is it, Lion?" asked Stanton in a whisper, reaching over and patting the dog on the head. The animal again arose, and instead of going to the door, walked to the corner of the room, and with a low, plaintive whine, commenced moving around the room. The hunter understood the meaning of this at once. Some one was walking around the house, and the dog was following him. Raising his hand for the brute to keep quiet, he placed his ear to the door, and at

the same moment heard the stealthy, cat-like tread of several persons. They passed on, and in a few moments returned and halted. There was no whispering or consultation, and no ear but that of the veteran woodsman could have detected the cautious footfall.

As the hunter rested on his hands and knees, and listened intently to these slight evidences of the presence of strangers near him, he was sure that a pressure was brought to bear against the door, and that those on the outside were doing their utmost to force it from its fastenings. But it could have resisted a great deal more, and he felt no apprehension of its failure to withstand the combined strength of a dozen Indian warriors. Several times the attempt was repeated, and once, the hunter actually heard a moccasin slip upon the hard earth, occasioned no doubt by the pressure of his shoulder against the stubborn structure.

All this time, Lion stood with his eyes fixed upon the door, as if he expected to see it open, and was prepared to spring at the throat of the first audacious intruder. Finally he lay down, and hearing nothing further of them, Stanton concluded that they had departed to await another and better opportunity.

At the first appearance of light, the inmates of the cabin were astir. Stanton was the first to venture forth, and as may well be supposed, he exercised a great deal of care in doing it, after his night's experience. He made an examination of the woods immediately surrounding the clearing, before either of the others came outside, and finding no signs of danger, he concluded to say nothing of what had occurred, except, perhaps, to Ferrington, as it would only needlessly alarm Annie.

The morning meal was soon finished, and the preparations for going to the settlement were commenced at once. Ferrington started to seek his horse, and was somewhat taken aback to find that he had strayed off in the woods. He was on the point of setting out to search for him, when Stanton interposed:

"I wouldn't attempt it; there are Indians around us, and beyond a doubt they have taken him on purpose to draw you into ambush."

"But, I am used to their deviltries, and have no fear that I shall fall into any trap they may set for me."

"I protest against your going; there is no need of it. I tell you, my young friend, there is little probability of any of us ever reaching the village."

"What has occasioned this fear upon your part?" asked Ferrington, in surprise.

Stanton related what he had heard during the preceding night, and added:

"It would be the height of absurdity for us to set out for the settlement without getting some better idea of the danger in our path. I am now going into the woods, and probably shall spend the forenoon there. I shall take what means I can to find your horse, and while gone, do you make preparations for the worst. There are plenty of provisions, but little water. Let us fill the cask the first thing."

This was but a few minutes' work, after which, Ferrington and Stanton came out again in front of the house, and continued their observation. Hans remained within, persecuting Annie with his attentions.

"Now what do you think of the capability of that cabin to resist any attack that can be brought against it?"

"It is strong and well constructed, but I am afraid it will take fire."

"Not a bit of it; the logs may appear dry, but they are so green, although they have stood some time, that it would require a furnace heat to burn them."

"You have committed one great oversight. While your cabin stands in the midst of a clearing, you have allowed a large branching tree to stand within a dozen yards of it. Do you not see that an enemy could turn that to account? It would not be an impossible feat for an active Indian to go out on one of those limbs and leap upon the roof."

"I admit all that you say, but that tree was not left standing through ignorance. The shade which it affords on a summer afternoon is so grateful and refreshing, that Annie petitioned that it might remain, and it is in accordance with her request that it remains there to-day."

"Why not cut it down?"

"I would hardly attempt it. The sound of the ax will

betray us to whoever may be lingering in the wood, and show that we have suspected danger. Better let it remain, as they can easily prevent us felling it, and in case we are assaulted, the tree in reality will be of little use to them."

;"Yaw, cut him down, cut him down," said Hans, who made his appearance just in time to hear the concluding words of Stanton.

"Cut it down, eh? Why do you want us to do that?" asked Ferrington.

"Let him fall against the house. When de Injin come in de lower story, den we crawl out on de roof, and slide down de limbs. Yaw, dat what we do."

"Have you mended your meerschauum?" asked Stanton.

"Yaw, purty high—not yit."

"Then employ yourself at that, and we will attend to our own business."

"I goes in to see my Annie," said Hans, turning about and entering the house again.

"We would be far better off without that blundering Dutchman than with him," said Stanton. "He is a nuisance that will prove only a dead-weight. However, we must make the best of it, now that he is with us. Do not be alarmed if I am not back until toward night, and especially remember to be ready for an attack at any moment, from the Indians who certainly are lingering in the wood."

With these parting instructions, Stanton bade good-by, to disappear quickly and noiselessly, without speaking further either to Hans or Annie. Left alone, as it may be said, with himself, Ferrington became fully alive to the responsibility that was thrown upon him. As he stood quietly surveying the cabin, and taking in with the eye of a strategist its advantages and its defects, he was strongly tempted to cut down the tree to which we have referred in spite of what the hunter had said. He could but believe that a relentless and inventive enemy would manage to turn it to account. After a long debate with himself, however, he gave up the resolve with considerable reluctance and misgiving.

As Ferrington turned his back upon the cabin, and looked out at the forest, stretching miles and miles away from the clearing, it seemed difficult to believe that that same

wilderness, so extensive and so silent, was the dwelling-place of the fierce wild beast, and the still fiercer wild Indian; that, at that moment, deadly enemies were lurking in it, watching the moment when they might swoop down upon the cabin, and destroy its inmates. Yet he knew it was true, and that this treacherous stillness would continue but a short time longer. Few indeed were the hours that remained, wherein they might pass to and fro as they chose. Full of these thoughts, and with a heart painfully impressed with the dreadful peril that was gathering around them, Ferrington entered the hunter's cabin.

CHAPTER VI.

HANS VANDERBUM ON GUARD.

Place none but *Americans* on guard to-night.—WASHINGTON.

As the day wore on and noon came and passed, and Stanton still remained absent, Ferrington could not avoid a feeling of uneasiness on his account. When Annie questioned him, he gave the answer which he had been instructed to give, but he saw that, like himself, she was far from being satisfied. The only incident worth relating that had occurred up to the middle of the afternoon, was the success which attended Hans Vanderbum's efforts to mend his meerschaum. His delight at this was extravagant, and a brief time after, he had it filled with tobacco and reveled in a Paradise of enjoyment.

The progress of time to those who are in suspense is always tedious and often painful. It seemed to Ferrington that on this autumn afternoon the sun remained absolutely stationary for hours in the heavens. Had he been assured of Stanton's safety, his enjoyment in the society of his betrothed would have been perfect but it being different, and a consciousness of the appalling peril rapidly closing around them; being added to his anxiety, his misery can scarcely be imagined.

Every few minutes he passed to the upper story and looked forth from the loop-holes in the vain hope that he might descry the form of his friend ; but the same profound quiet and immobility reigned over the forest, as though no deadly foe lurked within it, and he began to entertain a half-formed hope that the Indians might have with drawn and joined their allies in the attack upon the settlement.

Ferrington had ascended and looked forth fully a dozen times, when he seated himself by one of the loop-holes and concentrated his gaze upon a sort of natural avenue which opened several rods into the wood. The reason why this particular spot was selected for his observation was, simply because it afforded him a more extensive view than he could have otherwise gained. He had looked but a few minutes when he saw a flash of fire through the leaves, and heard instantly the sharp, whip-like crack of a rifle. With a beating heart he hurried below to see that every thing was secured. To his horror, Hans Vanderbum was endeavoring to unfasten the door, while Annie Stanton was doing her utmost to prevent him !

"What are you doing?" demanded Ferrington, in a voice of thunder, catching him by the shoulder and throwing him half-way across the room.

"I want to go out and see who dat am," he replied, drawing several quick whiffs at his pipe to prevent it going out.

"If you touch the door again without orders, I will shoot you ! There must be no trifling," he added, apologetically to Annie. "The danger in which we are placed is too imminent to permit any tomfoolery now."

"But my dear father," said she, with tears in her eyes, "is he not in danger?"

"I can not tell, Annie ; but, be assured he is as safe in the woods as he is here, and that he is fully able to take care of himself. I do not think that was his rifle."

"No ; I am sure it was not, for I am so familiar with its sound that I can always distinguish it."

"I would feel no unnecessary alarm, were I in your place. Perhaps your father thinks he can aid us best by remaining outside."

"Yaw, dat's it," interposed Hans, "he knows what's what,

like his dater ;" here he leered at Annie. " Hans Vanderbum will stand guard to-night."

" You stand guard," sneered Ferrington ; " you are no more fit to do it than a big baby."

" Ycu'll see," replied Hans ; " shust let me keep watch to-night. 'There won't no Injins dare come around den."

" Where do you wish to station yourself? In the upper story?"

" Nix ; I go out on the edge of de clearing and watch for de Injin."

" Well, I am willing, I am sure. Suppose you catch a glimpse of some of your foes, what do you propose to do?"

" Shoot dem all and den run for de house like de debbil to keep away from de oder ones."

" The plan seems good enough, and we will see that the door is unfastened so as to admit you without any delay."

" Yaw ; Hans will keep goot watch."

Soon it began to grow dark, and, as usual, Annie prepared the evening meal. But she sat down to partake of it with a heavy heart, for her loved father was absent, and for aught she knew, either dead or a prisoner in the hands of the Indians. Nothing could disturb the stolid indifference of Hans. He ate heartily, smoked vigorously, and chattered continually, totally unmindful of the broad hints that were given him to remain quiet ; and, apparently with the belief that it was the greatest of all Annie Stanton's earthly enjoyments to listen to his remarks. Ferrington was thoughtful and silent, and said but little, for the last half-hour had brought him thoughts more painful than any that he had yet experienced. He could not avoid the suspicion that there was a deep purpose lying beneath this expressed willingness of Hans to stand as sentinel through the night. With merciless foes without, and treachery within, his condition was perilous enough to make the bravest heart tremble. There were two acts of Hans Vanderbum's which were continually before him. The first was the readiness with which the fellow sprung to open the door when the knock of Stanton was heard, and the other was the attempt he made to unbar it, upon hearing the sound of the rifle during the afternoon. Prompted by jealousy, he may have been accessory to a plot

to betray Ferrington and Annie into the hands of the savages. At any rate, concluded our hero, he was either an ignorant, stupid Dutchman, or he was consummately crafty and cunning, acting his part to perfection. The events of the last few hours inclined the young man to the latter belief.

In the course of an hour or so, Hans expressed his readiness to venture forth upon his dangerous duty. Ferrington furnished him, reluctantly enough, with the only rifle beside his own in the house; and before permitting him to pass out, he went to the upper story and made a careful survey of the entire clearing so as to satisfy himself that no stratagem was intended. The moon had not yet come above the tree-tops, so that a considerable portion of the clearing lay in shadow; but so far as Ferrington could see, there was no living thing visible. Assured of this, he descended, cautiously unbarred the door, and the instant the huge form of Hans had disappeared, secured it and ran aloft to watch his movements. He saw him walk across the clearing at his usual gait, until enveloped in the shadow, when he faded from sight like a figure of the dissolving views. A half-hour's watch failed to discover any thing further, when Ferrington descended and rejoined Annie. He had wisely determined to say nothing about the suspicion he entertained regarding Hans, as he was satisfied they had not occurred to her, and she had already enough upon her mind to make her misery equal to his own. As he took his seat beside her, he bent his head a moment and listened. Silence, deep and profound as that of the tomb held reign, and looking in the face of Annie, he said:

"It seems difficult to realize that we are environed by the most dangerous of all enemies, where such perfect quiet exists."

"It may be, George, that we are not; that, whatever Indians may have been in the wood have departed and gone toward the village. Perhaps that is what detains father. He has been obliged to go a considerable distance to find out how matters stand. Finding that we are safe, he may have gone on to the settlement."

The hopeful view of Annie seemed reasonable, and Ferrington was disposed to accept it as a very probable truth. Admitting that the cabin had been watched through the entire

day by the savages, it seemed impossible to explain why they had allowed so many favorable opportunities to pass. He and Stanton both could have been shot as they stood in front of the cabin during the forenoon, and more than once since then, he had exposed himself to the same liability. Were they in the vicinity, they must have refrained from availing themselves of these advantages only in the hope of gaining better ones. But Ferrington, as we have said, was inclined to adopt the hopeful belief of Annie. Both ascended to the upper story, and from opposite sides of the room kept up an unremitting watch upon the forest and clearing.

"Have you detected any thing unusual?" asked her companion, when he had grown weary of his monotonous task.

"Nothing more than the falling leaf or the rustling of the night-wind through the trees."

"Neither have I; and vigilant and patient as I know the Shawnees to be, I doubt very much whether the eyes of a single red-man have been fixed upon this cabin for the last twenty hours."

"I do pray that such is the case, and that we may be spared after all. God has been so merciful and kind to us, I am sure he will not desert us in this extremity."

"I tell you, Annie, what I have made up my mind to do. I am going out to see what has become of Hans."

"And leave me alone in the cabin?"

"I will return to you the instant there is the least appearance of danger. You can stand at the door so as to admit me, and to close it immediately, should it become necessary."

"I will do as you think best, but I feel some misgivings about the prudence of such a step."

"Have no fear. I shall soon return to you."

The bolts of the door were withdrawn, Ferrington cautiously peered forth, and seeing the coast clear, sped rapidly across the clearing in the direction which Hans had taken.

Annie stood with the door drawn several inches, watching him with a beating heart, as he receded in the gloom, until when he was no longer visible, she listened with the most painful attention for some sound which might tell her of his movements, and looked forth in the vain effort to descry his form approaching out of the gloom.

Ferrington had scarcely reached the shadow of the wood when he became sensible of a powerful smell of tobacco-smoke. The whole air seemed impregnated and heavy with it, and guided by a heavy rumbling sound like the booming of thunder, he came upon Hans "standing guard." He was seated flat upon the ground, his dumpy legs stretched straight out, his back supported by a tree, his chin pressing on his breast, his limbs hanging limp by his side, his slouched hat on the back of his head and his shock hair hanging over his forehead and eyes. His chest went out and in at long intervals, at which that heavy, sonorous rumbling could be heard at a considerable distance. His gun lay on the ground several feet distant. His pipe had dropped from his mouth, and had not Ferrington known the circumstances, he would have assuredly believed Hans to be dead drunk.

As it was, our hero was disappointed, amused, yet gratified,—disappointed, because he had not doubted that Hans would keep awake; amused at the laughable appearance he made, and gratified, because he was now convinced that useless and burdensome as might be his presence, there certainly was no treachery in his heart. He was simply an indolent, stolid Dutchman—"only this and nothing more."

Stooping down, Ferrington shook him vigorously by the shoulder. "Come, wake up, my watchful sentinel."

"Yaw, hit him agin," muttered Hans, in his disturbed slumber.

"Wake up, I tell you, or your meerschaum will be broken."

"Yaw, nix, shmoke like dunder and blitzen. Come to my arms, me own Annie," said the Dutchman, reaching out and embracing the empty air.

A vigorous bump of his head against the tree effectually stirred up the comprehension of Hans. He blinked a few minutes, gouged his eyes, smacked his lips, as though he had just tasted some delicious morsel, and then looked about him.

"Do you know where you are?" demanded Ferrington, speaking in as loud a voice as he deemed prudent.

"Yaw."

"What did you go to sleep for?"

"'Cause I's shleepy."

"A great reason. I thought you promised to stand guard."

"I did shtand a while, and then I *shquatted* guard. Dunder and blitzen! I've cotched a cold in dis wet."

The ground where he had been seated was springy and spongy, and he had sunk several inches in it; so that when he arose, he came, as it were, out of a socket, with a sound that showed he certainly had dampened himself.

"Got a dunderin' cold now," said Hans, indignantly. "I'll have to cough and shneeze, and can't taste my pipe. Dunderation!"

"It's your own fault; you might know you would fall asleep."

"I didn't fall ashleep; I *sot* ashleep," he answered, doggedly, gathering up his gun and pipe.

"When you undertake to stand guard again, keep on your feet. Suppose the Indians had come upon you?"

"Dey wouldn't cotched Hans shleepin'?"

"I don't see what was to prevent it."

"I hear deir shtep, shtart up and run."

"They would have made no more noise than I did, and it required something more than the sound of my footsteps to arouse you."

"Injin shtep different—sure to hear it—can't fool Hans."

"True enough, for he is about as near a fool as he can comfortably get, already."

"Dat so; Hans ain't more dan dwo feet from a fool."

As this is the only attempt at witticism that the Dutchman was ever known to make, we feel duty bound to record it. He laughed heartily at it himself, and so did Ferrington, who gave him full credit for his prodigious success.

"Purty shmart in me," said Hans, shaking with laughter.

"I admit that I gained nothing in that encounter; but, as you say you have a cold, it will be best that you return to the cabin. Annie is standing by the door, and will admit you."

"Yaw, I go, and tells her dat Hans was purty near a fool to-night. Haw! haw! haw!"

"I've no objection. Let her remain by the door, as I may want her to admit me in a very great hurry."

"Yaw, I let's her. Won't she feels proud of her Hans

when I tells her dat? I tells it to our shildren, doo, when we settles down."

"Come, come, be off; it's getting very late, and you are catching cold all the time."

Hans shouldered his rifle, and went lumbering across the clearing in the direction of the cabin. Ferrington watched him until he reached the door, where, as he stood several minutes, it was evident a parley took place between him and Annie before she was satisfied that all was right. The door was shortly opened, however, and he was admitted.

Finding himself once more alone, Ferrington continued his reconnoissance of the forest and clearing. His step was so cautious and light that the profound silence was not disturbed. He moved carefully forward, until fairly within the protection of the wood, when he commenced circling around the cabin, with the intention of examining the spot where he had seen the flash of the rifle.

So stealthy and guarded were his movements, that nearly a half-hour elapsed before the desirable point was reached. A few straggling rays of the moon penetrated through the tree-tops, and served barely to make his path visible. He had concluded that he must be nearly upon the precise point, when his foot struck some object, and he stumbled forward. Stopping down, he saw that he had struck the dead body of his horse, which lay extended on the ground.

"This, then, explains the cause of that report," reflected our hero. "Some rascally Indian hunter has chanced this way, and out of mere deviltry shot my poor beast." It is bad enough, but I am relieved to find that it is you and not Stanton."

A further examination of the animal showed that he was barely cold, proof positive that the gun which had been fired during the afternoon was the one that had slain him. Feeling satisfied upon this point, Ferrington pushed forward, with the same stealth and caution that had characterized his former movements. He had gone several yards further, and was leaning against a tree, when his strained ear caught the faint reports of rifles in the distance, accompanied, he was sure, by shrill yells, like the war-whoop of the Shawnees.

It is a long way for such sounds to come. But the night is still, and there is no breeze to disturb their progress. I have never known the sound of a rifle or the yell of an Indian to be heard at that distance before. And yet it must be that. The place is attacked, and the fight is going on. Ah, me! I hope the villagers are prepared, for, if they are not, all hope must be gone, for of all Indians, the Shawnee is the most merciless. The main attack having been made, it can not be supposed that any of the savages are lingering in this vicinity."

Emboldened by this thought, he stepped from the tree, and strode with a more careless step toward the cabin. He paid little heed to the noise he made, for he was sure there was no danger of its being heard by other ears than his.

"They are all gone, beyond a doubt, and although it will be prudent for me to exercise caution, still there is no need—"

Two phantom-like figures suddenly appeared before him, as if they had risen from the ground. It needed but a glance to disclose that they were Indians, and that they had got between him and the cabin to cut off his retreat. Ferrington remained motionless a moment, in order to satisfy himself upon two points: first, as to the number of the Indians, and second, as to whether they were aware of his presence. There were evidently but two, and beyond a doubt these had been maneuvering for a considerable time in order to get Ferrington in the precise situation in which he now found himself.

With this knowledge came the mortifying fact that his rifle was unloaded, and that he had not a charge in his possession. Ferrington felt as though he deserved tomahawking for this culpable oversight, but it was too late for regrets. It was manifest that the savages were bent upon taking him prisoner. Springing backward several steps, as they approached him, and wheeling around, he ran with all his might right into the wood, they following at the top of their speed. Ferrington was as fleet as they, and not only held his own ground, but by great skill managed gradually to change his own course, until he was running directly toward the cabin, and had thus gotten between that and his pursuers. Just as he reached the clearing, he called out:

"Open the door, quick! The Indians are chasing me!"

Annie was ready, and when he came up, not a second was

lost. He darted in, just as a tomahawk buried its blade in the structure, and turning short around, he and Annie, with their united strength, closed and secured the door, just as the Indians came against it with a force so tremendous that the whole side of the cabin seemed to quake.

CHAPTER VII.

THE SIEGE OF THE CABIN.

And 'twas a night might shame the fairest day ;
So still, so bright, so tranquil was its reign,
They cared not though the day ne'er came again.
The moon high-wheeled the distant hills above,
Silver'd the fleecy foliage of the grove,
That, as the wooing zephyrs on it fell,
Whisper'd it loved the gentle visit well.
That fair-faced orb alone to move appeared,
That zephyr was the only sound they heard.

J. K. PAULDING.

ONCE within the cabin, and secure for the present from the Indians who had so nighly captured him, Ferrington ran instantly to the upper story in order to gain a shot at them. But, quick as were his movements, the Shawnees were too cunning to be caught in such a trap, and when he looked forth from a loop-hole, they had disappeared. Seeing this, he again descended.

"There is no use of our deceiving ourselves any longer," said he, addressing both Hans and Annie. "I did hope that the Indians had passed the cabin, and gone on to join the main party in attacking the settlement ; but I have just had strong evidence that they have not. Beyond a doubt, there are numbers prowling in the woods, and only waiting for the opportunity to attack or capture us."

"How was it that Hans was not disturbed ?"

"It is more than I can tell. They must have known that he was beyond the clearing. Perhaps those two who chased me were the only ones in the vicinity, and feared to attack us both, preferring to take me prisoner."

"Dey was afraid of *me*; dat's it. Dunder and blitzen! If I'd seen 'em, I'd have chased 'em to Pittsburg," exclaimed Hans, courageously.

"Be that as it may, we are besieged, and there are two rifles and plenty of ammunition in the cabin. Who uses the rifle, Hans? You or Annie?"

"Dunderation! I does. I shoots all I sees."

"You must obey me implicitly, then. Fortunately for us, there is a bright moon, and they can not approach us very closely without being seen. I would advise you to retire to your room, Annie, while Hans and I keep watch from the upper story."

"I shall go to my room to spend a few minutes, but do you suppose I could sleep or rest when we are in such danger? I will join you shortly." She was soon on her knees in prayer.

As Annie passed to her apartment, Ferrington and Hans went to the upper story, which was pierced on every side with loop-holes, so that they could watch every portion of the clearing.

"Now, as you have spent several hours in slumber, see that you do not close your eyes to-night," said Ferrington. "If you catch a glimpse of an Indian, take a quick but sure aim, and blaze away at him."

"Yaw—dunder and blitzen! dere's one now," exclaimed Hans, shoving his rifle through a port-hole and firing. But at the very instant of pulling trigger, he gave a vigorous sneeze, that nearly shook him apart, so that instead of striking the object of his aim, his bullet did not come within twenty feet of it.

"Did you hit him?" asked Ferrington.

"Nix; dat cold has settled in my nose, and makes me shneeze when I doesn't want to. Dat made me miss him."

"Keep on the look-out, then, and make sure of it next time."

"Yaw," said Hans, proceeding to reload his piece.

The position of Ferrington was such that he was enabled to keep watch of the clearing in front of the cabin and of the tree, which caused him so much uneasiness. He had hardly

taken his post, when he heard the light step of Annie beside him.

"Can I be of any use?" she asked.

"Yes, if you are determined to remain. Pass to the other end of the room yonder, and keep a good look-out from the loop-holes. If you see a leaf fall, tell me of it."

"If there were another rifle here, I would not need to call you."

"I am sure of that. I believe that gun which that blundering Dutchman has would be in far better hands, if it were in yours. If he strikes an object, it will only be by chance."

"Was that he who fired just now?"

"Yes; and, would you believe it, he sneezed at the very instant of firing, and of course missed his mark."

"Cotched a cold; dat's the reason," interposed Hans. "I shneezed so hard I like to 've blowed my nose off."

"Pity you didn't; and there would be no danger of such an accident occurring again."

Annie Stanton had taken her position, and a profound silence now reigned for over half an hour. The room was lighted, so that the inmates could barely discern each other's forms, but the illumination was so faint that those on the outside could only tell the location of a loop-hole by the flash of the rifle which was discharged through it. Gradually the quiet was broken in upon by a rumbling sound, repeated at regular intervals, and growing louder and louder, like the approach of thunder, first faintly heard in the distance.

"Confound that Dutchman, he's asleep again," said Fer-
rington. "I'll give him a crack upon his head, and see whether it will do him any good."

As he spoke, he took his ramrod, which lay on the floor beside him, and, with the metallic end, gave him a stunning thwack, which was followed by another sneeze, and confused muttering, and the exclamation:

"Yaw, save mine pipe! What's te matter?" he asked, looking around in the gloom of the room.

"Matter enough. If you can't keep awake, hand the rifle to Annie there, who will make good use of it."

"I was shust taking a leetle nap," said Hans, who, stolid as he was, could not avoid feeling this rebuke.

"And that is just what I am complaining of. A dozen Indians might steal up to the fort while you are taking one of your naps."

"I'm through now, and—"

A suppressed exclamation from Annie prevented further words. She beckoned Ferrington to approach. The latter did so on tiptoe, and inquired the cause of her alarm.

"There is something on the edge of the clearing yonder that I have noticed for the last ten minutes. I can not make out what it is. Perhaps you can."

Ferrington looked toward the object indicated, and saw what appeared to be a simple bush, the only peculiarity of which was that it stood *in* the clearing instead of *beyond* it. Had he seen it from the cabin at any other time, he would have supposed it had purposely been left standing by the settler, on account of its beauty. But he needed no one to tell him different now.

"What does it mean?" asked Annie, as she saw him cock his rifle, and push it cautiously through the loop-hole."

"It is a devilish Indian contrivance—"

"'Sh, George; do not speak thus," she interrupted, noticing the expression, in spite of the tumultuous feelings that reigned in her breast.

"I beg pardon. It is an Indian contrivance, and there are Shawnees hid behind that same bush."

"What do you intend to do?"

"Fire at it, as soon as the opportunity offers."

He kept his piece pointed at the bush for several minutes, and then sighting quickly, discharged it. The bush instantly dropped, and a shadowy form, leaping for an instant to view, disappeared with the quickness of lightning in the wood beyond.

"You have slain one," said Annie, who had watched the effect of the shot. "Look directly behind the spot where the bush fell; do you not see a dark object lying upon the ground?"

"I see it," replied Ferrington, reloading with great rapidity "He is not killed, but badly wounded, and he is crawling away, and will get off if I do not give him another shot."

"Oh, let the poor wretch go!" interposed Annie, her heart bleeding for the suffering savage.

"It would be showing mercy to the merciless, and giving them, voluntarily, a chance to revenge it."

"But he will die—"

The report of the rifle interrupted her, and the wounded Indian, springing several feet in the air, fell dead to the ground.

"There is *one* disposed of," said Ferrington, coolly reloading his rifle, and returning to his former position. "It isn't likely the bush business will be attempted again to-night. How you making out, Hans?"

"Yaw, purty goot; I keeps much better watch as soon as I-lights mine pipe," he answered, walking to the light.

"If you see a leaf move, be on the look-out for danger. There is no telling how cunning the dogs are."

"Yaw; Hans Vanderbum knows all about dat."

For the space of over half an hour, nothing further transpired. But at the end of this time, Annie again called Ferrington to her side.

"If I am not greatly mistaken," said she, "I have seen Lion once or twice very near the spot where that bush lies."

Ferrington's heart beat violently, at the thought that Stanton had returned, and was perhaps waiting to signal the inmates of his cabin to admit him, and he was far less collected than our heroine, when he peered forth from the loop-hole at her side.

"The dog has appeared three times, just coming to the clearing and running back again. I can not understand the meaning of his movements. Can it be that father is killed, and he is striving to draw our attention to it?"

"I am sure not. In that case, he would come directly to the cabin door. It is singular that he should appear upon the spot where that Indian lies."

"That Indian does not lie there. His companion came a few minutes ago and dragged him away."

"Why did you not tell me of it? I might have shot him also."

"It was done so quickly that you would have been unable to do so. See! there is Lion, standing in full view. Would it not be best to go down and admit him?"

Instead of following out Annie's suggestion, Ferrington again cocked his rifle and pushed it forth.

"What are you going to do?" she asked in alarm. "You are not going to shoot Lion?"

"No; I shall not shoot *Lion*," he replied, with a meaning emphasis on the last word. "Just allow me to watch the movements of that *dog* for a few moments."

The creature which Annie supposed to be the brute remained in full view for several moments. It seemed to be looking toward the cabin as if to attract attention. Failing apparently in this, it advanced in the clearing, and continued approaching at a slow, shambling gallop. Half way across the clearing, the awkwardness of its gait became still more noticeable. Several yards further, it appeared to tumble, and then rising on its hind legs, started on a rapid run. It was at this point that Ferrington deemed it about time to fire, which he did, and the apparent dog, springing high in the air, fell to the ground a dead Shawnee.

"There is your *Lion*," said he, with a meaning smile, as he again reloaded. "I guess the dog-trick will not be tried again to-night. Hans, how are you making out?"

"Very goot; hain't seen notting yet."

"Look out for bushes and dogs. You, Annie, may expect something different, as they will not be apt to appear again on your side of the house."

Annie was too astonished to reply. At the first appearance of the counterfeit animal, she was as firmly convinced as she was of her own existence that it was Lion. Difficult as was the metamorphosis through which the savage had gone, it would have deceived more experienced eyes than hers, and she was now in that state of mind that, had her real father advanced to view and called upon her, she would have scarcely believed his identity.

The cabin was so constructed that those in the upper story could fire in any direction, either out on the clearing, up in the tree which has been mentioned as standing close at hand, or down upon the heads of their assailants. In fact, it might properly be termed a block-house, as the upper story projected a foot over the lower, so as to afford its inmates an opportunity of discharging their pieces in the manner last mentioned.

Garrisoned with a dozen men, it might have held out against any force that could have been brought against it.

It was now getting so far along in the night that Ferrington, in answer to an inquiry of Hans, replied that daylight would appear in a couple of hours. The latter had employed himself so assiduously at his pipe, that the room was fairly blue with smoke, which oozed out of every loop-hole.

"How much of that weed have you about you?" asked Ferrington.

"Five or six pounds. What for you want to know?"

"Heavens! I was in hopes you were about out," replied Ferrington.

"Dunder, no. I always carries it about me. Doesn't you like te schmell?"

"I have no particular objection; but if you had any decency, you would not smoke while she is present."

"I didn't dink of dat. Does shmoke offend you?" asked Hans of Annie.

"I have no objection occasionally to it; but this is rather too much for comfort."

"Yaw, petter get use to it; you know you'll have to shtand a good 'eal of it when we gets settled down."

The cool impudence of this, as Hans continued smoking, took Ferrington all aback for a moment. His astonishment was turned into indignation when Annie vented her distress at the overpowering odor in a fit of coughing.

"You must put that pipe out, or I will smash it," said he.

"Of course, any thing to please te ladies," smiled Hans, laying the article down upon the floor, with a bland smile. Ferrington then heard him mutter to himself: "I was shust done shmoking or I couldn't 've shtopped."

"Let there be no more of this," said the soldier, "while any one beside ourselves is present in the room. It is getting so late in the night that we may look for another demonstration from the Indians shortly."

"Mine Gott, there is two Shawnees dis minute," said Hans, in a flurry of excitement, putting his rifle forth.

"Make your aim sure, and fire quickly."

"Yaw, dat fetched 'em," said Hans, as he discharged his piece. "No; by dunder it didn't."

Ferrington noticed a peculiar sound blending with the report of the rifle, and he felt sure that another blunder had been committed. Hurrying to the side of the Dutchman, he looked out upon the clearing, but saw no human beings, the Indians having undoubtedly fled, the instant the gun was fired.

"How comes it that you missed again?" he asked, thoroughly vexed that such was the case.

"De Injins must had a cold, doo, and shneezed demselves out of te way, when I pulls trigger."

"Well, reload your piece, and we will put it in better hands."

"Where in dunderation is my ramrod?" asked Hans, feeling around on the floor, and looking exceedingly bewildered.

"Ha! ha! that explains it," laughed Ferrington in spite of himself. "You fired it out of your gun. I heard the whiz of it."

"Yaw, I remember putting it in. I done it on purpose."

"Did it on purpose? Why was that?"

"I wanted to send it through half-a-dozen Injins when dey got in range, so as to string 'em on it, like John's frow strings her fish."

"There is but one ramrod now between us, and I will see that that remains in the room. Annie, will you take charge of this piece?"

"I would prefer not to do it, George. I have no desire to stain my soul with the blood of any human being, even though he be a savage."

"But will it not be perfectly justifiable? Are we not fighting in self-defense?"

"Yes, but I do not wish to do it."

"You may retain the rifle, Hans; but, if you fail again, I will take it myself rather than it should remain in such blundering hands."

"Shust wait till next time," said Hans, confidently. "I'll hit 'em next time—dunder and blitzen! dere's anoder Injin. Don't shtop me."

He had just finished loading his rifle, and now pointed it out, took aim and fired.

"Now see who's hurt!" he exclaimed, proudly.

His aim had been sure this time. Ferrington had heard the death-yell of the savage, and now saw him stretched lifeless upon the earth, convincing proof indeed that it was Hans' shot which had slain him.

"You did well; load again and look out for another opportunity."

As the strategic Shawnees had now appeared several times both to Annie and Hans Vanderbum, Ferrington deemed it time that something should manifest itself on his side of the house. Nor was he disappointed. He had resumed his position but a few moments, when he detected a movement at that portion of the clearing just in front of where Hans had attempted to keep watch during the earlier portion of the night. The distance was so great, and the object being half hid by the line of shadow thrown out by the trees, it was impossible for him to determine or even to conjecture for a time what it could be. If it were a man, he was upon his knees, for it was no higher than a person in that position. That it was some Indian artifice Ferrington was firmly convinced, and accordingly he kept an unremitting watch upon it.

All at once it came out from the shadow, and remained in full view for several seconds. To his unbounded astonishment, our hero then discovered that it was a dog, bearing a marvelous resemblance to Lion. "Can it be possible," he asked himself, "that they are about to try that trick again?"

The motions and antics of this animal were so natural that he watched it more closely, and when it showed itself again he was satisfied that it was the real original Lion, and no other. To make every thing sure, however, he passed to the side of Annie, and looking out saw the disguise which the Shawnee had used still lying upon the ground.

"I am going to the lower story," said he, "to admit Lion. I have just seen him, and he evidently wishes to come in."

"You are not mistaken, dear George?"

"I never have been misled by any of these foolish disguises with which the savage so often deceives the inexperienced. Remain here until I return."

With this he descended to the ground-floor. It was with some trepidation that he removed the ponderous bars, and

reflected that a rush against the structure would insure an entrance for the Shawnees. He cautiously opened it a few inches, holding the bars in such a position that they could be replaced in an instant. As he looked out, and saw nothing of Lion, he gave a low whistle. The dog instantly trotted out on the clearing, pricked up his ears and listened. Ferrington repeated the signal, and the next minute the dog was coming at full speed toward him. A moment later he burst into the room, and the door was closed behind him.

Annie was a witness of the movements of the hunter, and she now descended with the light. The joy of the dog at being admitted into the cabin seemed uncontrollable. He jumped first to the one and then to the other, wagging his tail with such spirit and vigor that that portion of his body behind his front legs partook of the same motion.

He ran around the room, whining, and once or twice uttered a short bark, and bending his head down, rubbed it against the leg of Ferrington. His eccentric actions at length awakened the curiosity of the two, and they exchanged significant glances.

"He is striving to attract our attention to something," said Ferrington. "Depend upon it, he has been sent upon some errand."

"He comes from my father. Ah! here is something tied to his neck."

As Annie spoke, she stooped down and took from the strap which served the dog as a collar, a piece of basswood bark, freshly peeled from the tree. On the inner side of this, she saw that something had been scratched with a sharp instrument.

"It is something my father has written," she exclaimed, joyously. "Help me read it."

It was brought to the light and with some difficulty deciphered, the writing being very indistinct on account of the peculiar surface used. The words were few, only the following:

"Keep up good hearts. They have attacked the settlement but I know not with what results. There are about a dozen Indians in this neighborhood. I choose to remain on the outside of the cabin as I can serve you better. Keep Lion with you. Annie, dearest, be not frightened. S. S."

"Matters begin to look more hopeful," said Ferrington. "Your ather has seen every thing that has taken place for the last two or three hours. He could not have witnessed the chase in which I took a part, or he undoubtedly would have assisted me."

"Where can he have been all this time?"

"As he speaks of the attack on the settlement, he has probably come from there. But we must not remain here. Our place is above."

On resuming their posts, Hans stated that all was well, no more Indians having appeared.

"Dey knows it is sure death to get afore *my* gun, and according, dey keeps out de way."

"Let them retain that impression as long as it is in your power to do so. Fire at the first appearance, and make your aim sure."

"Yaw; dat's te way I does business. If it wasn't for dis dunderin' cold, I would feel much better."

"I can only recommend you to exercise more care when taking your seat upon the ground."

Hans really had caught a severe cold by his exposure, which vented itself every few minutes in a loud sneeze, to which fact, doubtless, was partly attributable his wakefulness. Ferrington could not avoid a smile, at hearing him talk with himself. Every sneeze was followed by some remark, such as "Dunder and blitzen! my nose will be blowed off afore long." "That was terrible; it nearly shook my shoes off," etc.

The Shawnees had, probably, taken lesson from the loss of three of their number, and were more careful of exposing themselves. They had manifestly come to the conclusion that there was some one in the cabin who understood their usual artifices, and that they must attempt something original before they could gain any advantage over them.

Some twenty minutes or so after the admittance of the dog, the attention of Ferrington was attracted to a point about twenty yards distant from the spot where he had appeared. Three several times he was almost certain he saw a small flame, which was suddenly extinguished. It glimmered and ~~vibr~~illated like a star among the leaves, as though it was

moved hither and thither by some human agency. He was greatly puzzled to account for it, although he felt certain it was some other artifice which the Shawnees were about to attempt.

"Ah! I understand it now," he suddenly exclaimed. "It is what I have been fearing all along. The crisis of the danger has now come."

CHAPTER VIII.

THE HURON.

Bold children we of warlike race!
Our sharpened steel
Their hearts shall feel;
Our tomahawks shall pierce their brain,
Who dare to meet us on the plain,
And think us from the land to chase,
Which Manitou, the mighty, gave,
And which our fathers ne'er would yield!
Are we less strong? are we less brave?
No! soon we'll prove it on the field!

INDIAN WAR SONG.

WHILE Ferrington was gazing at the star-like point of light, he saw it suddenly rise in the air, and describing a beautiful parabolic arc, fall upon the roof of the cabin. Slight as was the sound thus made, it was plainly heard by Annie, who called his attention to it.

"It is a burning arrow that they have fired," he replied. "They are trying to burn us out."

"They can not accomplish it," said she. "The roof is too damp to take fire. Every summer father puts a cover of wetted bark over it, so as to prevent any thing of the kind."

"It is our salvation that he has done so. It will be all up if the fire could take hold. Ah! here comes another blazing arrow."

A few moments later, and the flaming missiles were shooting through the air like rockets. For a time, they rained thick and fast upon the roof, which sent up a thick, damp smoke in consequence thereof, when, finding that this would

avail nothing, the savages sent them against the sides of the cabin. The arrows seemed tipped with burning tow; wherever they struck they remained a moment, and then dropped to the earth. Ferrington watched the effect of these with a throbbing heart. More than once, as he saw a twist of flame crackle and burn vigorously for a few seconds after the missile had dropped to the ground, was he on the point of dashing water down upon it. But the blaze of the tow was too light, and from the nature of the case, could not be applied long enough to the solid logs to make it take hold.

Full fifty of these blazing arrows must have been discharged at the cabin, before the Shawnees gave up the effort to burn it. For some time, the smoke that filled the house was almost suffocating to the inmates. The savages had learned enough of the marksmanship of the latter to keep carefully out of sight. The young hunter watched the point from which the arrows came; but, as they who fired them stood several yards back from the clearing, they could not be seen at the moment of leaving the bow. He discharged his rifle twice at the spot where he calculated the Indians were standing, but he believed with no success, as there was no evidence of it given.

A few minutes after the burning shower had ceased, Hans Vanderbum called out:

"Mine Gott! dey 've sot de woods on fire!"

Had Ferrington had time to reflect on the utter impossibility of this, he would not have experienced such a shock of appalling peril, as he did when he ran to the side of the speaker and looked forth.

"Look yonder, de whole sky is lit up. De village is burning and has sot fire to de woods, and by dunder, de Ohio is on fire doo!"

"You blunderhead!" laughed Ferrington, "it is nothing but the sun rising."

"Yaw, so 'tis," replied Hans, who, for once in his life, had had his equanimity disturbed. "Looked like fire fust, scar't me a little."

Day was indeed breaking. Innumerable arrows of golden light were shooting up from the horizon; the few stars that had been visible retreated into the depths of space, and the full round moon grew silvery and faint, until it had almost

blended with the atmosphere. Higher and higher rose the sun, until its rays had illuminated half the heavens, when it burst above the wilderness, and the three watchers within the hunter's cabin drew a sigh of relief.

"Thank God, the night is passed!" exclaimed Ferrington, fervently. "We will have some respite, to-day, from this unceasing watchfulness."

"Yaw, I shall have time to shmoke a lettlet," added Hans, proceeding to light his pipe. "We ain't going to watch no longer, shust now, be we?"

"There is little probability, I think, of our being disturbed for several hours, at least, but it will not do to be off our guard. You can go down stairs, Hans, and assist Annie in preparing breakfast, while I remain here to keep watch. So soon as you are through, come above and relieve me."

"Yaw," replied Hans, throwing down his gun and descending the stairs with the agility of a boy. "Come on, my Annie, it will be goot for me to help you. I will know better how, when we gets settled down."

Annie busied herself with preparing the morning meal, in which, as might be suspected, Hans was a greater impediment than an assistant. He was constantly in the way; in attempting to bring the table into position, he upset it; he fell over the chairs several times, and committed so many other blunders, that at her own request, he gave up his efforts, and taking a seat, occupied himself in watching her movements.

"You undershtands it, I sees," said he, with one of his winning smiles. "You will take good care of Hans one dese days. I don't exshpect dat I'll have to work at all, only sit in de house and shmoke. You can split de wood, can't you?"

Annie hardly knew what reply to make to the Dutchman. Several times she was on the point of telling him that she was engaged to Ferrington; but, all things considered, she concluded not to do so at present. She therefore replied:

"I am too busy, Hans, to hold conversation with you. You will have to do all the talking yourself."

"Yaw, bashful, I sees; hain't dat it?" and he attempted to pinch her, as she passed him.

"You must cease such actions as those," said Annie, "or I shall call Ferrington down."

"I was shust in play. You mustn't t'ink so much of what I does; you'll have to get used to sich lettle things, when we gets settled down."

"Let us wait till then."

Hans kept up his observations and questions, and when the meal was prepared, sat down to the table with her. His equanimity received another shock when he saw the mild, gentle Annie, bend her head forward and ask the blessing of her heavenly Father upon the food spread before them. He had never seen her perform such an act before, and it impressed him so vividly, that he did not utter another word while partaking of the meal. At its conclusion, he rose, lit his pipe, and went aloft.

"I shmokes, now," said he, "as she ain't here."

"Yes, smoke to your heart's content," answered Ferrington, yielding his place. "But don't fall asleep. The Shawnees may think this the most favorable opportunity to attack us, as we will be the most apt to be off our guard."

"Dey finds out mighty different," said Hans, with a sneeze. "I keeps sharp watch, and shoot all I sees."

Again cautioning him, Ferrington descended and joined Annie. The day bidding fair to be as warm and pleasant as the preceding one, she had allowed the fire to slumber, after using it for culinary purposes.

"There will be no need of it," said Ferrington, "except, perhaps, that as long as the smoke goes out of the chimney, there will be no danger of the Shawnees coming upon us by that way, and in fact, little danger of their attempting it at all," he added, noting an expression of alarm upon her face.

The meal was about half finished, when Hans was heard moving about, and presently he called out:

"Has any one of you lost a handkerchief?"

Ferrington and Annie looked at each other.

"What can he mean?" asked the latter.

"Has you lost a handkerchief, my Annie? or you, Mr. Ferrington?"

"No; what in the name of common sense do you ask such a question for?"

"'Cause dere's an Injin out here, dat has found one."

More puzzled than ever, Ferrington arose from the table, and went to the upper story.

"What do you mean, Hans? he asked."

"Look out dere. Dat Shawnee has found a handkerchief, and is holding it on a shtick, I shpose for us to see."

A glance showed to Ferrington an Indian standing upon the clearing, with a "flag of truce." He was some twenty yards distant, and held what appeared to be a piece of a hunting-shirt, fastened to a twig, over his head. He stood perfectly motionless, evidently waiting until he was hailed before approaching closer. Our hero was not surprised to see this signal, generally unknown to barbarous warfare, adopted by the Shawnees. From their repeated and continuous wars with the whites, they had learned its uses, and had been known to resort to it before. But, while expecting that their enemies would chivalrously respect its sacred character, the Shawnees, like true savages, resorted to it only as an artifice, and as such, Ferrington felt it was used on the present occasion. Without exposing his person, he called out from one of the loop-holes:

"Well, what is wanted?"

"Want to come in," replied the Indian, in almost pure English. The savage, in fact, was the Jim of whom we have spoken in a previous chapter, who, previous to this, had been supposed to be a true friend to the whites.

"Haven't we shown you that we are unwilling you should come in?" asked Ferrington.

"Want to come in and talk," added the savage.

"There is no need of that. Approach closer; as long as you bear that flag, you are safe."

Thus assured, the Shawnee came nearer and asked:

"Goin' to fight?"

"We intend to fight to the death. We *never* surrender."

"I come from great chief. Tear down house, if don't give up. Tomahawk all, and scalp 'em."

"Suppose we do give up?"

"Den keep all prisoner till war over."

"I have no faith in the Shawnee's words. The Shawnee has two tongues, and he uses both."

"The Shawnee speaks truth," said Jim, straightening himself up proudly.

"Dunderin' big lie," called out Hans Vanderbum. "I knows two Shawnees dat come to de village and promised to treat me, and they never did."

"How many of you are in the wood?" asked Ferrington.

"More than can be counted. More than the whites can resist."

"That remains to be proven. Perhaps we have friends also in the wood."

"You had *one*, but he is in the hands of the Shawnees."

Annie, who had taken her place beside her lover, uttered a suppressed scream at this direful intelligence.

"It's an infernal lie. They have not got your father. The dog is only trying to frighten us."

"The Shawnees have him, and he sends me to ask you to open the door that his life may be spared."

"Bring him forward, and I will believe it. You might as well stop talking, Shawnee, for you can't scare us."

The Indian said no more, but turning about, walked slowly toward the wood. Ere he had reached it, Hans made desperate efforts to get his rifle through the loop-hole, on the side toward him."

"What do you mean to do?" asked Ferrington, laying his hand on his shoulder.

"Shoot him!" replied Hans, excitedly. "Dat's Jim, one of de Shawnees dat promised to treat me."

"I can't help that," said our hero, firmly; "that flag of truce protects him. He is among the trees, and safe now."

Hans was greatly disappointed at thus being prevented from taking vengeance upon the savage; but he had learned by this time to acquiesce quietly in the commands of the young hunter, and he only smoked the harder.

At Ferrington's urgent request, Annie retired to her room to spend a few hours in sleep, while Hans stretched out upon the floor, and in a few minutes was oblivious to external things. He remained on watch nearly the entire forenoon, but nothing occurred to excite any new apprehension upon his part. Several times he heard the distant reports of rifles, and occasionally the faint yell of an Indian. Two or three

times, he caught a partial glimpse of some of the Shawnees moving through the wood, but no shot was exchanged with them.

This prolonged silence, the young hunter knew meant something. If, during this time, the hands of the savages were idle, it was certain their heads were not, and he was in constant expectation of some daring and original exploit upon their part. What he most feared was, that they would construct some shelter for themselves, under the protection of which they would approach the cabin and burst in the door. The feat which had been attempted by the Shawnees during the night, under the guise of a bush and dog, as previously described, had been merely an effort to determine whether the house had one point more vulnerable than the others. The most these could have done, would have been a dangerous attempt to fire the building, and it was this alone which prevented Ferrington from allowing them to approach the cabin.

It was near noon, when the young hunter heard Annie moving below. He decided, however, to let Hans sleep some time longer, and therefore did not disturb him, when she made her appearance. In answer to her smiling salutation, he assured her that there was no new cause for alarm, the savages probably waiting until night, before renewing their attack.

"You have seen nothing of father?" she asked, apprehensively.

"No; it would be extremely difficult for him to manifest himself to us, as from what I have seen, it is very certain, the savages are hovering around continually, and he would be sure to be seen. Feel no alarm about him. He is too old a hunter to be caught in such a simple trap. He will be seen, when the safety of his daughter will not permit him to be absent any longer."

It was about noon, when Ferrington concluded to awaken Hans Vanderbum. This was accomplished by rolling him over on the floor, and then knocking his head against the side of the house. This done, he kicked several times, rolled himself over, and then became thoroughly awake with a sneeze. Some few minutes more elapsed, before he

comprehended his situation and surroundings; then he expressed himself ready for any duty that might be assigned him.

"I am somewhat fatigued," said Ferrington, "and propose to spend several hours in sleep. You have no objection to acting as sentinel while I do so?"

Hans replied that he most certainly had no objection.

"You will not need to be urged to the utmost vigilance when you know that the safety of Annie depends upon it."

"Yaw, we undershtands dat, me and my Annie," said Hans, with a knowing look toward the latter.

"Should any thing occur—any thing at all appear that looks suspicious, do not fail to awaken me."

Hans promised that he would do so; and with this assurance, the young hunter lay down, and almost immediately fell into a profound slumber. Annie, believing there was no occasion for her services, again descended to the lower floor, and busied herself with her household duties.

Ferrington had slept some two or three hours, when he was awakened by hearing a voice shouting. Listening a moment, he heard Hans:

"Come down out of that tree, I tell you! Come down! I'll hit you with these stones!"

Looking around the room, he saw that the Dutchman was gone, and with a throbbing heart he ran to the loop-holes and looked forth. What was his dismay and horror at seeing Hans Vanderbum standing out in the clearing, with a heavy stone in each hand, and calling out to two Shawnees in the tree, in the words given above.

With one bound he went to the bottom of the stairs. As he reached the lower floor, he saw Annie in the act of securing the door.

"Hold!" he called out. "What has possessed that madman? Let me bring him in!"

At this instant Hans, losing all patience with the Indians, who refused to obey his commands, commenced hurling the stones at them. For a few moments the savages dodged them; but at length he struck one with a tremendous force, and he dropped like a log to the ground. Not heeding him, Hans was throwing as determinedly at the other, when a couple

of rifle shots were heard, and two Indians started at full speed across the clearing toward him. Comprehending the imminence of the danger, Ferrington sprung out of the door, and catching his comrade by the neck, dragged him by main force into the cabin, where, dropping him upon the floor, he turned and instantly secured the entrance.

"How did this happen?" he asked of Annie.

"I can not tell. I had just gone into my room a few minutes, when I heard Hans' voice on the outside, and running in here, I saw the door standing open. I instantly fastened it, believing he had fallen into the hands of the savages.

"You are a fine one, ain't you?" said Ferrington, scornfully. "I shall know better than ever again to intrust the safety of this cabin into your hands for a single moment."

"Didn't I hit him 'long side te head nice?" said Hans, apparently delighted with the success which had attended his venture.

"Hit him?" repeated the hunter. "I am half tempted to hit you. I have lost all patience with your fooleries. Why did you go out into the clearing?"

"To hit dat Injin dat wouldn't come out te tree."

"But—how was it?" asked Ferrington, half disposed to laugh in spite of his vexation.

"Wal, you sees you goes to shleep, and I watches. Bime-by a couple of Injins goes to climbing dat tree, and I tries to shoot 'em, but dey keeps on de oder side, so I couldn't get a shot at 'em. Den I t'inks I could hit 'em with a stone. I told 'em if dey didn't come down, I'd come out and hit 'em hard. Dey kept a-crawlin' up, and so I drops my gun, runs out, and fetches one down nice, and would 've fetched de oder if you hadn't stopped me."

"Did I not tell you to awaken me if any thing occurred?"

"It hadn't 'curred yet; 'twas jist 'curring."

"It is too late now for regrets. So long as I am in this cabin, Hans Vanderbum never has the opportunity again given him to bring destruction upon all of us."

Hans Vanderbum expressed his sorrow at this decision by a sneeze, and then by lighting his pipe and smoking it.

Suspecting now that the Shawnees would use the tree, Ferrington hurried to the upper story and looked out upon it

He was not a moment too soon. At that very instant he saw a brawny savage passing out on the limb that extended toward the cabin, and gathering himself like a panther for a spring. Just as he crouched down and concentrated his strength for the leap, the soldier's rifle did its duty. The Indian, in fact, had really left the limb, and Ferrington saw his body poised for an instant in mid-air, when it struck the roof, and rolled like a ball to the earth.

This was the only one visible, but he believed there was another somewhere in the tree. After several minutes he discovered the red-skin, who was about half-way to the top, and had his body so carefully concealed behind the trunk as to be covered from aim. The manner in which Ferrington discovered his enemy was, by seeing his hand as he moved himself along. The very minute he saw the hand he fired, wounding it badly; but the savage maintained his position; and evidently thinking that he stood a poor chance of success, commenced a cautious descent of the tree. Ferrington kept a keen watch upon him, in the expectation of gaining a shot at his body, but was disappointed. The savage reached the ground in safety, where, taking his position behind the broad, protecting trunk, he was too cunning to leave until convinced that he could do so without receiving the bullet of the white man.

The summary check that this effort of the Shawnees to reach the inmates of the cabin by means of the tree and roof had received, prevented their repeating it; and it was now a settled matter with Ferrington that nothing more would be attempted before night. What now caused him the most anxiety was that the main party of Indians which had attacked the settlement would return shortly and reinforce those who already besieged the cabin. Matters were approaching a crisis, and the contest must be decided one way or the other before twenty-four hours had passed over their heads.

"I tell you what we do," said Hans, taking his pipe from his mouth; "we gets away den, sure."

"Well, what is it?"

"Open de door and tell de Injins to come in. As dey comes in de door, we crack 'em over de head, and then we go in de woods and run. I'll take care of my Annie."

"I am afraid, Hans, that the plan would hardly answer. I see no course but to fight it out. I place great hopes upon the fact that Stanton is at hand. Under heaven, I believe he is to be our salvation."

"Write something and tie it on Lion's neck dere, and let him go."

At first Ferrington was disposed to adopt the suggestion of the Dutchman, and petition Stanton to use some means for their instant relief; but, upon reflection, he gave it over. He thought the hunter must be aware of their situation, and must have decided upon some plan for their rescue. What this was, of course, he had no means at present of determining.

The afternoon gradually wore away, and the beautiful twilight of an Indian summer again rested upon the forest and clearing. Feeling, perhaps, an undue sense of security, Ferrington, accompanied by Hans Vanderbum, descended and joined Annie at the evening meal.

"Is there not danger in our all being together?" she asked, hesitatingly.

"I think not; they have found out that it is rather a dangerous proceeding to climb the tree and drop down upon the roof."

"Yaw; dat one dat I hit mit a stone found it so," said Hans.

"And that one who threw the stone, I guess, has discovered that he ran more risk than would be prudent for him to run again."

"Hans Vanderbum is afraid of nothing. If he hadn't a cold, he would go out and fight all de Injins!"

"That will not be necessary. Restrain your eagerness until the proper occasion comes; we will be glad to see it manifested then."

"I should think—"

"Hush!" interrupted Annie, with a start.

A noise was heard, as if some heavy body had fallen upon the roof, and immediately after the footsteps of some one running over it.

"There's an Indian on the roof as sure as heaven!" exclaimed Ferrington, starting and seizing his rifle. "A curse on my shortsightedness!"

"Hark!" again interrupted Annie; "he is coming down the chimney!"

As she spoke, a rushing, tumbling noise was heard, and the next moment a half-naked Indian, covered with soot and dirt, descended into the fire-place, so lightly that he was not thrown off his feet. Clubbing his rifle, Ferrington raised it over his head, but ere the blow descended, Annie sprang forward, and catching his arm, called out:

"Do not strike him! It is Oonomoo, the Huron!"

CHAPTER IX.

IN THE FOREST.

Speed, speed for your freedom, the war-dogs are out,
Their scent is a sure one, it makes out your path;
Speed, speed for your safety, I hear the fierce shout
Of the foes who are panting for blood in their wrath."

"How de do?" asked the Huron, calmly confronting the astonished inmates of the cabin.

"That is the last method I suspected you would ever take to visit us," said Ferrington, grasping the hand of the savage, with a warmth and cordiality that perhaps was increased by the peculiar circumstances in which they were placed.

"Glad to see all—where you come from, eh?" he asked, turning toward Hans Vanderbum, who, it will be recollected, was the one that furnished him with liquor some time before, when his appearance had so alarmed Annie Stanton.

"Come from de village," replied Hans. "Where'd you come from?"

"Told you Oonomoo would come," added the Huron, addressing Annie. "Trabbel all day—all night—swim Ohio to git here—got too late purty nigh."

"How long have you been hanging around in the woods?"

"Ebber since day come—watch for chance to come down chimney."

"Did you see those Shawnees shot who attempted the same thing?"

"Seen 'em—one tumble off house—'other git hand hurt."

"How durst you then try the same thing?"

"Knowed wan't watchin'—jumped on roof quick—afore you could come up."

"But did the other savages see you?"

"Tought I's Shawnee too."

Ferrington here noticed that the dress of the Huron was similar to that worn by the Indians mentioned, which accounted for his escape from their rifles.

"You are a brave fellow," exclaimed our hero, admiringly. "I feel as though all danger were passed now that you are with us. I had forgotten entirely that you had promised our Annie here to return."

"Oonomoo nebber forget what he says."

"Neither did I think you would," said our heroine. "True I did not mention it again, but it was hardly ever absent from my mind."

"Yaw, I t'inks he was eider here or somewhere else," added Hans, who appeared to think it his duty to say something.

"Have you seen any thing of my father?" asked Annie, trembling with anxiety.

"Seen him little while ago—in de wood—wait for us to come out."

"He is not a prisoner then?"

"Dunder and blitzen! didn't he just now tell you he was waiting for us to come out? How could he be a prisoner den?"

The angry glance of the dark eyes of the Huron was a more withering reproof to Hans than would have been the half-formed words of Ferrington. He shrunk before it and was silent.

"Is it not necessary that one should keep watch while we are conversing?" asked the young hunter.

"Let him go," replied Oonomoo, pointing to Hans.

The latter, without any further command, hurried above and did not make his appearance again until he was summoned.

"Now, how are we going to get out of this place?" asked Ferrington.

"Open door purty soon—go out—Shawnee won't see us."

"How do you know that?"

' Only one Injin watch—dat his scalp," replied Oonomoo, holding up one of the trophies stained with fresh blood.

" I thought they were going to attack us to-night, and supposed an extra guard would be kept over us."

" Goin' to 'tack to-morrer—one of 'em gone to village for more Injin—ain't 'nough so many," said the Huron, holding up the thumbs and fingers of both hands.

Ferrington began to get an idea of the true nature of the case. The experience of the day had convinced the savages that their force was not large enough to bring the inmates of the cabin to terms, and they had accordingly dispatched one of their runners to the main party for a sufficient number to make their fall a moral certainty. Knowing this, the crafty Huron had entered the house in the daring manner described, after he had consulted with Stanton, and matured a plan for the relief of his white friends. He had waited until the Shawnees had disposed of their forces for the night, before commencing operations. He saw them collect together and withdraw some distance into the wood, while one of their number was stationed to watch the cabin. Stealing unawares upon this savage, the Huron had slain him so quickly and noiselessly that not a sound escaped the doomed being.

Ferrington saw that all depended upon the sagacity and cunning of the Huron, and that, perilous as was the attempt to leave the house at this time, it was the only opportunity that would be given them.

" When are we to start?" he asked.

" Now—soon as hunter whistles."

As he spoke, a pebble struck the door, as if hurled from a considerable distance.

" Dat him," cried Oonomoo, eagerly. At the same time Hans called out:

" Here's Stanton, out here! Shall I shoot at him?"

" No; come down and get ready to leave the cabin."

The Huron cautiously opened the door and listened. Faintly yet distinctly came a low, tremulous whistle from the edge of the wood. The Indian looked behind him, and seeing that all was ready, signified that they were to follow him. He then stepped out, Annie did the same; after her came Ferrington and Hans Vanderhum. They paused a moment, while

Oonomoo carefully closed the door behind them, and then, led by him, they started across the clearing.

It would be difficult to picture the sensations of those four individuals as they sped noiselessly forward toward the wood. Oonomoo with his head bent ready to catch the first intimation of danger—the gallant-hearted young hunter, his arm thrown protectingly around Annie Stanton, whose courage did not falter—the blundering Dutchman, bringing up the rear;—all formed a procession whose emotions were as different and characteristic as were the beings themselves. The Huron was in his element. He was in imminent danger and was out-witting the hated Shawnees. Ferrington felt that sense of impending peril, which would be natural to one of his age and temperament in such a situation, and his chief apprehension was for the beloved being at his side. She, for her part, experienced a horror of the merciless savages who were seeking her life, and a firm, all-sustaining trust in the great Father who was bringing her out of danger. Hans Vanderbum may be said to have experienced no emotion at all. Half way across the clearing, he caught his foot, and fell flat on his face. An admonitory caution from Ferrington barely saved the expression of his vexation that the safety of his pipe had again been compromised. Finally the whole party entered the shadow of the wood. As they did so, a dark form stepped from behind one of the trees. Suppressing a cry of pleasure, Annie Stanton received the embrace of her father.

The Huron, with an ejaculation, moved forward.

"Tread soft—don't make noise," said he, speaking in a husky whisper.

"Yaw, me undershtands dat," replied Hans, in his ordinary voice, from the rear.

"Please not to talk," admonished Ferrington, turning his head toward him.

"Yaw, I doesn't talk nor make no noise—not one bit, 'cause dere ain't no need of it. It might be bad for Annie, and we'd never git settled down."

"Hush!" commanded Ferrington.

"I hushes all de time. I makes no noise," added Hans.

They had passed some two or three hundred yards through the forest, when the latter paused. The watchful Huron

instantly discovered this by the tread of those behind him, and stopped.

"What he stop for?" he asked.

"I want to light mine pipe," said the latter, producing his flint and tinder.

The eyes of the Huron gleamed like lightning, as he drew his knife and stepped as softly as a cat to the Dutchman, who was stooping upon the ground.

"I light Dutchem's pipe," said he, holding the weapon aloft.

Hans looked up, and saw the dark, scowling face of the Indian, through the bright moonlight that streamed through the trees, and the drawn knife; he needed nothing additional to understand that Oonomoo was in earnest. He put up his tinder and box without a word, and resuming his position at the head of the party, Oonomoo led the way.

For fully an hour they journeyed forward without again halting, when the Huron suddenly paused in the attitude of intense attention. A faint breeze was stirring the tree-tops, but the others heard no sound save that. It was evident, however, that the acuter ear of the Indian had detected something. He stood motionless fully a minute, and then taking a step or two, stopped again.

"What is it you hear?" ventured Stanton.

"Shawnee," replied Oonomoo.

"We hear no sound at all."

"Nebber mind—Shawnee comin'."

"How can they follow us?"

Instead of taking the route to the settlement, as it might naturally be expected the fugitives would, in the belief that the crisis of danger with that had passed, Oonomoo had gone in a southern direction toward the Ohio. Accordingly, it was a mystery to them how they could be followed through the woods by their enemies. But, as Stanton asked the question, the reply came from the means itself. A long, dreadful sound, half yell and half yelp, swept through the arches of the forest to the listening fugitives.

"That is the cry of a bloodhound," said Stanton. "Look at Lion! he has heard it, too."

The dog stood with head raised and ears erect, gazing back through the wood, as though he too had scented danger.

Looking up in his master's face as the former spoke, he seemed to ask permission to take the back trail in order to meet and combat this new danger.

"Yes, go, Lion," said the hunter. "You will dispose of that bloodhound."

The dog shot off like a meteor, and disappeared instantly.

"The hound must be in advance of the savages," added the hunter, "and Lion will finish him before they can come up."

"Suppose there are more than one?" remarked Ferrington.

"I guess there can not be. How is it, Oonomoo?"

"Two—t'ree—t'ree of 'em," replied the Huron. "Dog have to fight 'em all."

This startled Stanton somewhat, who had not calculated upon such a combat for his dog, and he regretted at once that he had allowed him to depart.

"Do you think they will overcome him?"

"Dunno—hain't time to wait and see—walk fast—Shawnee comin'."

The fugitives proceeded at nearly a run, the Huron calling forth all their energy to reach a large creek which flowed into the Ohio. From his manner, the whites felt certain that their danger had increased. The echoing yells of the bloodhounds, which had been heard at intervals, suddenly increased to a furious snarling and growling, as though they had come up with some object on which they were venting their malignity.

"Fightin'," said Oonomoo, significantly. "All t'ree at dog."

"I am half tempted to go back and assist him," said Stanton, irresolutely. "They will tear him to pieces."

"Won't do," added the Huron, increasing his pace.

"But I can soon come up with you again."

A rifle report rung through the forest.

"Dead now," added Oonomoo. "Shawnee come up and shoot 'im—foller after us."

Beyond a doubt such was the case, and, with his heart in his throat, Stanton obeyed the savage, who was now literally the guide and commander of the party. The wood being very "open," the fugitives flitted from moonlight to shadow

continually, and could have been seen at quite a distance. The dismal baying steadily came closer, proof that the pursuers were gaining rapidly. Suddenly, the Huron paused again, but only for an instant.

"Only one dog now," said he.

"Do you mean that Lion killed the other two?"

The savage nodded his head.

"Noble brute! he would have slain the remaining one had he not been shot. Heavens! hear that sound!"

Faster and faster sped the fugitives, until they were nearly running. All at once they caught the shimmer of water among the trees. At this instant, the fearful bay of the bloodhound rung through the wood, and looking back, his long, sleek, gaunt form was seen gliding swiftly behind them. As quick as lightning, the Huron drew his knife, and sprung to the rear. It would have been an easy matter to have shot the terrible brute, but Oonomoo knew better than thus to afford his enemies a sure knowledge of his situation, and this was why he determined that the combat should be a silent one.

On came the brute, his head bent and his mouth open, giving vent to that most dismal of all cries. He was following the trail with a persistency that would not be denied, and with a certainty as absolute as fate. When yet several yards from the Huron, he halted and raised his head; then he seemed to curl back like the serpent when about to strike, and, with jaws open and foaming, made a leap at the throat. He never touched the ground alive. With a skill and dexterity that was marvelous, he caught the brute when in mid-air by the back of the neck, the feat being performed with such ease that the animal seemed to have slipped his neck into the hand of the Huron without any effort at all upon the part of the latter. Holding him thus, with one sweep of his keen hunting-knife, he cut the dog's throat from ear to ear, and, as the blood spouted forth, he flung the quivering form into the branches of a sapling, where it caught and hung, with the blood pattering down upon the leaves.

"Tree dog fust," said Oonomoo, in a matter-of-fact tone. "Den one—now a'n't any—Shawnee have to foller trail hisself."

He sprung again to the front of the party, and heading directly toward the water, which shone brightly under the moonlight, he proceeded at a rate that taxed the energies of Annie to the utmost.

"Dunder and blitzen!" exclaimed Hans Vanderbum, as he pitched headlong over a gnarled root, and picked himself up, puffing like a porpoise. "My pipe is broke in a t'ousand pieces, and I've catched more cold, and will die, and me and Aunie will never git settled down."

A moment later and the whole party stood cowering, trembling and listening upon the wooded banks of a large creek which flowed into the Ohio; but the only sound heard was a suppressed sneeze from Hans.

"Perhaps they can't follow us, as they have no hounds," suggested Ferrington.

"Shawnee comin'—be 'long pretty soon—Oonomoo hear 'em," replied the guide, in his short, quick, sententious tones. "Wait till come back," he added, starting off along the bank of the creek.

Oonomoo appeared searching for some object, from his manner, parting the bushes and peering among them, and running rapidly to and fro. Suddenly he uttered a subdued exclamation of joy, and hurrying back to the fugitives, ordered them to follow him as rapidly as possible. They lost no time in doing so, and discovered, almost immediately, the cause of his movements. An Indian canoe lay hid beneath the bushes. It was shoved into the water, and Oonomoo motioned the whites to enter it. Stanton went first, his daughter followed, and then Ferrington, when the frail vessel settled so low that, with a certainty, the additional weight of Hans would sink it, while that of the Huron would bring it to its very gun-wales.

"What is to be done?" asked Stanton. "Let me take to the woods, Oonomoo, and then the boat will bear you and Hans."

"You shall not do that," said Annie, laying her hand upon her father's shoulder. "It is not your duty to peril your life."

"Stay where be," replied their guide. "Oonomoo and Dutchem won't come in."

"I'll swim behind te boat," said Hans. "I kin paddle like a duck. If te boat is too heavy, I carries Annie on my back."

"I'm afraid if you should attempt that you would settle down rather sooner than you expect," laughed Ferrington.

"I undershtands dat. Once in Sharmany I fell into de canal one night and couldn't git out, and I had to paddle around till morning. Mine Gott! what a cold I've catched!" added Hans, as he vainly attempted to suppress another sneeze.

"That nose of yours will bring us into trouble," said Ferrington, "if it gives vent to many more explosions like that. Can't you close your hand over it strongly enough to keep it quiet?"

"Den de end will blow off or bust!" replied Hans.

"How is your pipe?"

"All broke to pieces," he answered, in a voice that was indescribably mournful. "I doesn't care what 'comes of me now. Mine pipe is gone."

This fragmentary conversation was carried on in a whisper—the fugitives feeling no hesitation in doing it, as the Huron did not object. He and Hans stood on the shore, as a matter of course, he being engaged in listening for some sound that might tell him of the whereabouts of his enemies. Ferrington was about to add a remark, when Oonomoo raised his hand as an admonition for silence.

"Push off," he said, instantly; "Shawnee comin'—keep 'long under shore; don't talk—don't make noise."

Ferrington and Stanton did as requested, and the next moment had disappeared underneath the shrubbery and dense shadow that lined this bank of the stream.

"Come wid me," added the Huron, moving down-stream, which was the opposite direction from that taken by the canoe.

Hans followed, and a moment later the two were lying flat on their faces, their bodies effectually concealed by the bushes which in this spot grew very rank.

They had lain thus scarcely five minutes when footsteps were heard, and looking up through the stalks and interstices

of the shrubbery, they saw several shadowy forms passing to and fro. The Shawnees, beyond a doubt, believed the fugitives were concealed somewhere along the bank, and accordingly they were searching with great care and minuteness.

Oonomoo and Hans Vanderbum were lying as still as death, when, just as a couple of savages were directly opposite them, the latter said in an excited whisper :

"Mine Gott ! I've got to shneeze !"

He made frantic efforts to prevent the explosion. He caught the knob-like end of his nose and held it as if in a vice ; his face grew red, then black, and his eyes seemed bursting from their sockets. But, it was of no avail. The next instant a sneeze so forcible and tremendous broke the utter stillness of the night, that Hans Vanderbum's hat was blown from his head, and the two Shawnees opposite him started as if a bomb had burst beneath their feet.

CHAPTER X.

HURON VS. SHAWNEE.

"Anon, their eighty Indians rose,
Who'd hid themselves in ambush dread ;
Their knives they shook, their guns they aimed,
The famous *Paugus* at their head."

THERE never had existed any friendship between the Huron and Hans Vanderbum. The former, who possessed all the pride and sensitiveness of a true Indian warrior, felt keenly the disgrace into which his love for "fire-water," had repeatedly brought him, and Hans Vanderbum having been his tempter more than once, he naturally looked upon him with dislike, which, while it was not strong enough to excite positive hate upon his part, was of such a character that had he felt certain he could have saved the plethoric Dutchman on the present occasion, he would not have made the least exertion to do so. The instant, therefore, Hans gave vent to the sneeze—which had been heard certainly a hundred yards distant—Oonomoo turned his whole skill toward saving

himself. Without uttering a word, he slid swiftly and silently backward until he had reached the bank of the creek, when, stooping very low, he ran rapidly down-stream.

"Tam my nose!" exclaimed Hans, whose eyes were filled with tears from the frantic efforts he had made to suppress the sneeze. "I knowed it would ruin me, when I sot down in dat wet ground. What shall we do, Oonomoo?"

He turned around and was considerably astonished when he discovered that the savage was absent.

"He's run off, and I guesses I will, too," thought Hans. "I'll show the Shawnees how the Sharmens can run."

Saying which he started off on a gait similar to that with which a fat pig, that had been deprived of the use of one leg, might be supposed to travel. He had gone hardly a rod, when a dozen agile forms were around him, and seeing that it was all up, he cried, "I surrenders," and was taken prisoner.

Skillful and rapid as was the retreat of the Huron, there was one Shawnee who saw his crouching form as he fled down the bank of the creek, and this savage, bent upon having the glory of his capture or death, dashed after him. Upon ordinary occasions, Oonomoo would have scorned to turn his back upon a single foe, were he white or red; but, knowing that the wood was swarming with enemies, and conscious that a single yell from his pursuer would bring a score more around him, he acted the part of wisdom and did his best to elude him.

This had been comparatively an easy task if the night had been darker; but the bright harvest-moon was directly overhead, and in spite of the favoring shadow of the wood, the gigantic Shawnee saw him almost as distinctly as if it were midday. Finding that it was impossible to throw him off his track, Oonomoo now resolved to draw him away from his companions, where there would be none to witness the combat, and then engage him single-handed.

Leaving, therefore, the immediate bank of the stream, where he was running at disadvantage, the Huron came up into the open wood and took a direction parallel with the stream, managing at the same time to throw the Shawnee directly behind him. Flitting in and out among the trees,

dodging hither and thither with such quickness that, had the pursuer wished it, he could not have stood the least chance of bringing him down with his gun, Oonomoo was not long in making the discovery that he possessed sure means of escape. His fleetness of foot was so great that he had never been overtaken in a regular chase, and it was the easiest matter in the world to leave this huge savage far in the rear.

But the Huron had no such intention. Many a Shawnee scalp hung at his girdle, and he resolved that another should be added ere the morning sun arose. To make the matter sure, he kept up his flight, until certain that the struggle could be ended without witnesses, when he commenced lagging in order to allow his foe time to come up. The latter was not loth to accept the advantage, and in less than a minute he was so close that he raised his tomahawk and hurled it full at the head of the flying Huron.

The latter had been expecting this, and, dodging the weapon, whirled around with the quickness of lightning and stood at bay. The Shawnee was coming with such impetus that it was impossible to check himself, and he had only time to draw his knife when the two came together and the hand-to-hand struggle of life and death commenced.

The Shawnee was fully one-fourth heavier than the Huron, and more powerful, being at least ten years younger ; but the latter was more supple and active, and withal, in his intercourse with the whites, he had acquired no inconsiderable knowledge of wrestling and pugilism, so that, all things considered, perhaps the opponents were nearly equally matched. Both, too, were inspired by the most implacable hate, for the Shawnee knew the Huron, and had heard of his exploits when a boy. The enmity of the former was inspired by the fact that Oonomoo, smarting under his grievous wrongs received at the hands of the Shawnees, had declared eternal war against them, forswearing, as an inevitable consequence, a portion of his own people, that is, the Wyandots of Ohio, who were their natural allies. It was sufficient for Oonomoo to know that he had one of that hated race before him. Nothing could have nerved his arm to greater fury.

Both the Indians struck at each other at the same moment, and with an effect that was as unexpected as it was singular.

Their naked fists encountered each other with such force that the knives of each flew from their hands, and, as both had thrown away their rifles at the commencement of the affray, the Shawnee had no weapons except such as nature gave him, while the Huron had his tomahawk remaining. Seeing his disadvantage, the former rushed upon the latter ere he could draw his weapon, and throwing his muscular arms around him, lifted him by sheer strength from his feet and hurled him violently to the ground. The wonderful quickness of the latter saved him from much harm, however, and he was instantly on his feet again.

This time he succeeded in drawing his tomahawk, and bounding back several feet so as to be out of reach of his combatant, it shot from his hand like a meteor and was buried in the massive bosom of the Shawnee. The latter sunk back upon the ground and expired instantly, while the Huron, recovering his knife, dashed forward, and seizing his scalp-lock in his left hand, circled the keen point of his knife around its roots, and a moment later the disgusting trophy hung from his girdle.

Deeming himself now safe from pursuit or discovery, Oonomoo set about the task of finding his friends. Hans Vanderbum he knew was a prisoner in the hands of the Shawnees, but he cared nothing about that, and had no thought of attempting to assist him. The fugitives, it will be remembered, had gone up-stream, so that they were fully a quarter of a mile distant. To reach them it was necessary to go through that portion of the wood where their enemies were searching for them, and Oonomoo had the most lively apprehension that they would be captured. The bright moonlight would prevent them from crossing, and a minute search along the bank could hardly fail to discover them.

Reflecting a moment, he determined to adopt an artifice to mislead the Shawnees. Going to the creek, which was close at hand, he forded it, and found, as he expected, that it was only two or three feet in depth. Both sides being lined with trees, he had little difficulty in accomplishing his purpose. He ascended the stream until opposite the spot where the Shawnees had come upon his hiding-place, when he paused and uttered a faint shout. A few moments later, he caught

a glimpse of several forms moving along the opposite bank, when he discharged his rifle among them, giving at the same time a defiant yell. A number of the Shawnees, believing the fugitives had crossed, instantly followed in full pursuit. Oonomoo had no difficulty in eluding these, and making a circuit, he came back upon the same creek, but at a point a quarter of a mile further up, and continued his search for his white friends.

He could scarcely hope for success in this, so long as he remained upon the present side of the creek, and he accordingly determined to recross. This was as delicate and dangerous a task as he had ever undertaken, since he knew that his artifice had only partially succeeded. The main party of the Shawnees still remained on the other side of the stream, and were ranging up and down it in search of the fugitives. It was, therefore, an absolute impossibility for them to cross, without falling into the hands of their enemies.

Oonomoo had purposely made his dress correspond with that of the Shawnees, so that he relied upon this disguise on the present occasion; and, as he understood their tongue perfectly, he would not have hesitated in an emergency to go directly among them. The only danger was, that in the daytime, or in the light of a camp-fire, he would be recognized, as he was well known to most of the Shawnees.

Listening a moment to satisfy himself that there were none in the immediate vicinity, he stepped into the creek and commenced wading across. He walked carefully yet without any timidity, and was fairly within the middle of it, when five or six Shawnees came down to meet him. This was rather more than he expected, and he was debating whether or not to turn back under some pretense or other, when the same number appeared behind him and entered the stream. There was now no course left but to put a bold face upon the matter, and carry out the deception which he had commenced. To attempt to elude either party would have awakened suspicion, and the position of the Huron in such an event would have afforded him no chance at all of escaping.

"Have you seen nothing of them?" called out one of the Shawnees before him.

"They have fled, and their trail can not be followed till the light comes," replied Oonomoo, in the same tongue.

"The Huron called to us from the other shore."

"But he has gone, and has borne away the scalp of one of our warriors."

At this intelligence, the Shawnees upon both shores sent up a dismal howl, and Oonomoo concluded that if any one had reason to conceal his identity, he was the man. He had told of his own exploit, that he might enjoy the pleasure of hearing the lamentations of his foes, even though he increased his own peril by so doing. He even wailed in chorus with them, although it may well be suspected that little mourning filled his heart.

A moment later, those in the rear of the Huron entered the creek, and he made his way across and appeared directly among his most deadly enemies. He was with them but a moment, when he was assured that his appearance had created no suspicion, every one believing that he was far on the other side of the stream.

"Have the whites been seen?" asked Oonomoo, in the Shawnee tongue.

"There is one of them that has fallen into our hands."

"Is he the hunter?"

"No, the big man, who can not run fast."

"He is worth nothing to us. What will we do with him?"

"He will go to the Shawnee village with us."

"Was not Oonomoo, the Huron, with him?"

"Yes; but he ran away. He dared not meet the Shawnee warriors."

Oonomoo's blood boiled at this accusation, but curbing his feelings, he replied:

"The Huron is prudent as well as brave. He met one of our warriors alone, and has borne away his scalp."

"He stole upon him, when he saw him not, and struck him in the dark."

"It's a lie!" exclaimed the Huron, totally forgetting himself for a moment, in the burning indignation he felt. At this unexpected insult, the surrounding Shawnees placed their hands upon their knives, and their battery of black, gleaming eyes was leveled upon the single warrior who stood in their

midst, and thus flung back in their faces their own falsehood. For a moment the Huron was in imminent danger; but his cunning came to his aid, and in a voice as soft as a woman's, and with a mournful cadence in it, he added:

"I saw our warrior fall. He was fighting hard, and died like a true Shawnee brave."

"And did you stand by and see your brother fall, and not raise your arm to help him?"

"The Huron fled before I could come up to him."

"He is a coward, then—a woman," replied several.

As Oonomoo could not refute their accusation without placing himself in a more delicate situation than was that from which he had just rescued himself, he was compelled to bear this galling insult in silence.

"The Shawnee warriors are swift of foot," said the one who had carried on most of the conversation with him. "They will overtake him ere the sun rises, and his scalp shall hang in the Shawnee lodge."

"The Huron is also light of foot; his knife and tomahawk are keen, and his eye is true. There are many in pursuit or he would not run."

At this moment a shot was heard in the distance.

"They have caught him!" said several, exultingly.

"Perhaps it is the white man," suggested Oonomoo, who had good reason to disagree with him.

"He can not escape, for our warriors are close upon him."

"The Huron is a fox," said he, "he has outwitted us. He went down the chimney, and we thought he was one of our own warriors."

Oonomoo paused, but as there was no response to what he had said, he added:

"He slew one of our braves; he took the whites out the cabin; he had gone far into the woods, before we knew he had fled."

"He can run fast when his enemies are behind him. When they are in front, he lags, and goes slow."

"He has taken many a Shawnee scalp, and he still wears his own."

"He will not wear it long," said a warrior, who was becoming excited at the iterated praises of his enemy.

"He will wear it many years—"

"It's a lie!" interrupted the savage, brandishing his knife in air. "Wittuwamet has said it, and he will make his words true. The scalp of the Huron shall hang at the girdle of Wittuwamet when the morrow's sun goes down."

Saying which, the exasperated warrior strode to the creek, made his way across, and plunged into the forest on the other side, fully determined to carry out the threat he had just made. Oonomoo affected to be humbled by what the savage had said; and for a few minutes after his departure he maintained silence. Then, raising his head, he said:

"Wittuwamet is brave. He is a Shawnee."

"And Oonomoo is a Huron. If they meet, the Huron will die."

"The Shawnees are a mighty nation, and the Hurons are their friends."

"But Oonomoo is the enemy of both. He kills the squaws of the Hurons and Shawnees when their warriors are gone. The Huron and Shawnee braves have hunted a long time for his scalp."

The crafty Oonomoo had an object other than his own safety in continuing the conversation with his enemies. The fact of their being so far up the creek showed that they were by no means satisfied that the fugitives had crossed, and were making a most diligent search for them. It was in order to give them an additional means of safety that he kept them in the present position. At the utterance of the last remark, the party, numbering about a dozen, started down the stream again, and he joined them.

Having gone a hundred yards or so, he was surprised to see a light glimmering through the trees, as if a camp-fire were burning. This satisfied Oonomoo that the party which had beleaguered the cabin received their reinforcements very shortly after the escape of the fugitives, and it was undoubtedly their attack upon it that had revealed their flight to them.

Approaching the camp-fire, three individuals were seen seated near it—two Indians and Hans Vanderbum. The three were smoking, and evidently on the best of terms—the Dutchman talking, and making himself as agreeable as his captors would permit. Hearing the tramp of the coming savages, he

looked up and nodded to them. The flame of the fire was so bright that Oonomoo managed to keep his face in shadow, so as to avoid discovery both from Hans Vanderbum and from the Shawnees themselves. He came as near the fire as he durst, and then halting, looked at Hans Vanderbum.

"Yaw; she's a splendid gal, and I hopes we'll be settled down some day," said he. "I don't want you to catch 'em."

A brand fell apart this instant, and Hans Vanderbum looked around. As he did so, he saw and recognized the face of the Huron, as he drew back to avoid the increased glare of light. Not dreaming but he also was a prisoner (otherwise he would not have thought of doing such a thing), he arose, and, walking around the fire, said:

"So they gets you too, did they, Oonomoo? Sorry; but I guesses they won't hurt you. Take a shmoke with me."

The Huron saw that he was discovered, and knowing that no deception could avail him now, he sprung high in the air, with a yell of defiance, and darted away in the woods, with a full dozen Shawnees in pursuit.

CHAPTER XI.

STILL IN THE FOREST.

Ah, soothe the wanderer in his desperate plight,
Hide him by day, and calm his cares by night;
Though savage nations with thy vengeful sire,
Pursue their victim with unceasing ire—
And though their threats thy startled ears assail,
Let virtue's voice o'er filial fears prevail.—COLUMB.

THE impetus which the hunter gave the canoe sent it several rods up-stream, when, knowing that if either the Huron or Hans Vanderbum were captured, the Shawnees would naturally suspect the rest of the party were in the vicinity, he bent all his energies toward ascending the creek as far as possible before they reached it. There was a single paddle with the boat, and this he managed with such skill that when Hans Vanderbum gave vent to his unfortunate sneeze it was

only barely audible. Even in the imminent peril in which the fugitives were placed, this occurrence brought a smile to the faces of the three.

"I am afraid Hans will pay dear for his drowsiness the other night," said Ferrington. "He seems unable to control that nose of his, and if our pursuers have not heard that explosion, they are much further off than we have reason to believe them to be."

"But Oonomoo is with him," said Annie. "Suppose he is lost, what will become of us?"

"Never fear for the Huron," replied the father. "He has been in worse predicaments than this, and he will manage to care for himself."

"I take it that Oonomoo bears little friendship for Hans," added Ferrington, "and he will leave him to shift for himself."

"The presence of that Dutchman has been a constant source of anxiety to me. It is a wonder that we have escaped thus far, with him blundering along with us."

"Keep close in to shore," admonished our hero. "It won't do to get out there where the moonlight comes down upon us; we will surely be seen."

"If I only dared shoot the canoe over to the other bank," said the hunter, looking across the creek as if he had half made up his mind to do it. "Were I alone I would attempt it at any rate."

"It is running too great a risk. Some of them must already be watching the creek."

"Hark!" interrupted Annie; "I hear the tramp of their feet. They must be coming this way."

Stanton bent his head and listened. The crackling of the dry twigs beneath the feet of the hurrying Shawnees was audible to all.

"If they commence searching the bank, I am afraid we will be seen," he whispered. "Hold! yonder is the best hiding-place we could find."

A rod or so distant, the top of a large tree had fallen into the water, while the trunk was lifted a foot or two above the surface, as the base rested upon the bank. Beneath this the canoe glided, approaching so close to the submerged portion

that the three inmates were compelled to bow their heads to the gunwales.

"Keep your heads down," whispered Stanton; "we stand a much better chance of being overlooked. Make your position as easy as possible, for it is more than probable that you will have to retain it for a considerable time."

"The current runs pretty rapidly here, and I do not see how we shall be able to keep the canoe broadside to it," said Ferrington.

"We are so close to the shore that that is an easy matter. The hold which I have of this limb will answer."

Had the Shawnees suspected that the fugitives had possession of a canoe, it is hardly possible they could have escaped; for their search being instituted with that knowledge, they would have examined every spot or recess which could have afforded it a concealment. The creek, from its densely-lined banks, offered good hiding-places for them in either case; and it was this which led the Indians to separate and prosecute the search with such vigor.

The spot selected by the hunter could not have been better chosen. It was the last place where one would have looked for a canoe, and it was passed by several Shawnees before any thought it worth attention. Ferrington was listening for some sound other than the wash of the current against the boat, when Annie touched his arm.

"What is it you want?" he asked.

"Look there!" she whispered.

A rod or two above them, a Shawnee had walked out several feet in the stream, where, having halted, he was gazing intently at the tree which sheltered our friends, as if he half suspected it could tell a tale. He was in his war-paint, and standing beneath a flood of moonlight; every feature was as plainly visible as if it had been midday. The hearts of the fugitives throbbed painfully as they watched him; and Stanton, with a gesture, commanded the most implicit silence upon the part of all.

The Indian stood perfectly motionless for a minute or two, and then waded back to the shore.

"I guess he suspects nothing," remarked Ferrington, partly raising

"Hist! he is coming this way."

Such proved to be the case. He had hardly spoken when a slight vibration of the log was heard, followed by the light tread of the savage as he walked out upon it. The situation of the fugitives was now perilous in the highest degree. Should their enemy look close in beneath the log, he could hardly fail to discover the canoe. His first proceeding, however, was carefully to look through the limbs of the tree which lay on the water, to see whether the head of any one was thus concealed. While thus engaged, the shout of Oonomoo was heard upon the opposite bank. The Shawnee appeared to recognize it, for, springing out into the stream, he hurried across and joined the others in the pursuit.

"That is as narrow an escape as I ever had," said Stanton, raising his head, and looking furtively around him.

"Is he gone?" asked Ferrington.

"Yes, that shout appeared to draw him away. It sounded to me like the voice of Oonomoo."

"It was his, and no doubt was done purposely to draw off the savages in pursuit. He knows well enough that a close search is pretty sure to discover us."

"Hans Vanderbum can not be with him."

"He is captured, beyond a doubt. He would stand no chance at all of escaping, especially while he has such a cold."

"I wonder whether any more of them are to walk out on this tree and make their observations," smiled Ferrington.

"Likely enough. At any rate, it is the safest place we can choose, and it will not do to leave it while there is a Shawnee along the bank."

"We can not hope to escape without the assistance of Oonomoo, and encompassed as he is, I do not see how he will be able to find us."

"Depend upon it he will have no difficulty in doing that."

"Being dressed like a Shawnee, we can not recognize him unless he gives us some signal which we can understand."

"I have no fears about that. I wish it were a more difficult matter, for the Shawnees then would not cause us so much apprehension."

"I tell you what I shall do," added Stanton. "I am

going into the wood, and try to get some idea of these savages."

"Do you think the success will pay the risk?" asked Ferrington.

"I have no doubt it will. I may discover some channel of escape for us."

"Do not do it, father," plead Annie. "The moon is so bright that you will surely be seen."

"Do not be alarmed. I shall shortly return."

Saying which, he stepped into the water, and waded carefully ashore. As he came up the bank, he caught the glimmer of the camp-fire of which we have spoken, and cautiously approached it. He managed to get within a few rods of it, when, deeming it imprudent to venture nearer, he took his station behind a tree to watch those before him.

They were Hans Vanderbum and the two Indians which Oonomoo saw upon coming up with the Shawnee party. The Dutchman had furnished the savages with a goodly quantity of tobacco, and they, in turn, had loaned him a pipe, he having ruined his beyond all hopes of repair. A cloud of smoke was ascending from each mouth, and Hans Vanderbum manifestly was as well pleased with his situation as if he had been in the company of his white friends.

"Yaw," the hunter heard him say, "she's a fine gal. I expects me and her will be settled down purty soon."

One of the savages nodded his head, and made a reply, which Stanton was unable to hear.

"I hopes you won't cotch her; she's afeard of Injins, but she would like to be cotched now, I t'inks, 'cause dey've got her Hans Vanderbum. Dunder and blitzen! she must cry her eyes all out."

"Good—Shawnee catch—burn," said one of the savages, in very broken English, having little idea of what the white man was talking about.

"Yaw, de fire burns betterish goot."

"Where pale-face?" queried the same Indian, fixing his keen black eyes upon him.

"Doesn't know; dey runs off in de dark, and leaves us. 'Spose dey's hid somewhere around in de woods."

Stanton was satisfied that if Hans Vanderbum was stolid,

awkward and blundering, he was nothing more. There was no treachery in his heart, and the secret of the canoe was safe with him.

"Kill—take scalp—don't tell," added the Indian, threateningly.

"Yaw—can't help it—wait till I gits done shmokin'."

"Where hide—eh?"

"Dunderation! hain't I told you I doesn't know? Go find 'em if you want to see 'em," replied Hans, indignantly.

This set the matter at rest for a while, and the trio smoked in silence. Stanton noticed that Hans Vanderbum was not bound, his captors evidently thinking it unnecessary to bind a man of his locomotive powers. By-and-by he added, with a beaming smile:

"I made you run like te tuyvel, afore you cotched me, didn't I?"

"Ugh! run fast."

"If you'd give me time to got under way, den I would got off. I runs half a mile afore I gets agoin', and I goes anoder one afore I can shtop. I hadn't got agoin'."

"Try agin—run like deer—maybe," said the Shawnee, who seemed to possess a little waggyery in his disposition.

"I'm shmoking now, and doesn't want to be dishturbed. I hopes my Annie can run like me if dey gets after her."

"Shawnee after her—catch—bring back—take scalp—got long hair—make good scalp to hang in Shawnee's cabin."

Hans made no reply to this, but after smoking a while, asked:

"When be the rest coming back?"

"Back soon—come quick—when cotch pale-face."

"S'pose dey can't find 'em."

"Kill him got, den."

"Do you mean, kill me?"

Both Indians nodded vigorously forward. Hans smoked as quietly as ever, and at length answered:

"You'll have to fight hard afore you can do dat."

"Shawnee chief back soon—den know."

"Yaw," replied Hans, in no wise disconcerted or alarmed.

Stanton was debating with himself whether or not to attempt the rescue of Hans, when a loud, wailing howl was

heard from the party of Shawnees up the river, and he concluded it was time to attend to his own safety. Accordingly he stole his way back again to the fallen tree, where, to his astonishment, he found the canoe gone.

"This is rather mixing up matters," he muttered, indignantly. "Where in the name of common sense has Ferring-ton gone with the boat?"

He searched the undergrowth for some distance along the bank, but without any success, and was on the point of giving up, when a low whistle caught his ear. Following up the source of this signal, he saw that he had twice passed within a yard of the cause without observing it. A rod or so above the spot where the tree had fallen in the water, the bank made a slight curve inward of just sufficient extent to admit the canoe, while the tangled shrubbery that grew around was of such a character as effectually to conceal the peculiarity of the shore from any one who was passing on the land.

"How do you like it?" asked Ferrington, as the hunter took his seat before him.

"It is the best recess you could have selected; I never should have found you, had you not signaled to me."

"We saw you pass each time, and waited on purpose to learn the wisdom of the change I ventured to make."

"There is no danger of discovery I think, unless some of the Indians know of this peculiar turn of the shore."

"That can not be the case, as they must believe that it was not design but a mere accident that brought us to this particular point on the creek. Did you see any thing of Hans?"

"Yes; he is a prisoner, and appears as well suited with his new condition as he could have been with his old one. He has been furnished a pipe and is taking his comfort."

"I hope no harm will befall him, for we possess no ability to help him in his strait."

"He hasn't sense enough to comprehend his danger. I make no doubt but what he will be tomahawked. Indeed, I have heard as much intimated to him within the last ten minutes."

"How does he take it?"

"Smokes away contentedly as ever, and will in all probability do so, so long as his head remains on his shoulders."

"What was the cause of that howling we heard a few moments ago?"

"The Huron, I think, is at the bottom of it. He has likely enough slain one of their number, and they have just learned it."

"Annie, here, was greatly frightened lest you had fallen into their hands."

"The cries would have assumed a different character had such been the case. They were too dismal to announce any triumph or success."

"There is one matter that troubles me," said Ferrington, after a moment's pause. "Suppose these Shawnees remain in the vicinity until morning, how can we hope to elude them?"

"We must remain here until Oonomoo returns, or they have gone. It will not do to venture out of this concealment so long as there is any danger."

"I trust the Huron has cunning enough to find us when he wishes to do so."

Stanton raised his hand as a sign that further conversation was interdicted. He had again caught the footfall of some one approaching. Whoever it was, he was exercising little caution, for the snapping of dry twigs was heard again and again, and the swaying of the bushes as they closed behind him.

One thing was certain. He was coming directly toward the trembling fugitives. He reached the edge of the creek not a dozen feet above them, and then stepping in the water walked down until he was directly opposite. Here he paused, and reaching out his hands, parted the bushes and gazed down directly in the pale faces of the three inmates of the canoe. Ferrington was drawing his knife, when the savage spoke:

"Oonomoo t'ought you dere—ugh!"

And the next minute the Huron stepped cautiously into the canoe.

CHAPTER XII.

CONCLUSION.

Indulge, my native land ! indulge the tear,
That steals, impassion'd, o'er a nation's doom :
To me each twig from Adam's stock is dear,
And sorrows fall upon an Indian's tomb.
And, oh, ye chiefs ! in yonder starry home,
Accept the humble tribute of this rhyme ;
Your gallant deeds, in Greece, or haughty Rome,
By Maro sung, or Homer's harp sublime,
Had charm'd the world's wide round, and triumph'd over time.
DR. DWIGHT.

"WHERE are the Shawnees ?" asked Stanton, as the Huron took his seat in the canoe.

"In woods—all round," he replied, sweeping his arm around him. "Hunt for us all time—look sharp—don't find."

"It appears they haven't found you ; but how are we going to get out of this place with them watching every rod of the creek ? Are we to wait till daylight ?"

"Go now," replied Oonomoo, shoving the canoe from its concealment. "Put head down—Shawnee won't see."

The fugitives had sufficient confidence in the Huron to obey him implicitly, and although they felt like questioning the prudence of this move, neither of them said a word, and he, fully aware of their colloquial tendency, forbade either of them speaking even in a whisper, or to raise their heads to the gun wale of the boat.

As soon as he had freed the canoe from the undergrowth along the bank, he dipped the paddle deep into the current, and sent it shooting with surprising velocity down-stream. The skill with which he managed the frail vessel was wonderful. So great was the impetus he gave it, that the water dashed in spray over the bow, and Stanton actually thought several times that, deeply laden as it was, it would dip beneath the surface. He hugged the bank as closely as possible, keeping in beneath the band of shadow which the rising moon was rapidly narrowing. More than once the limbs brushed over the boat, and several times threatened to arrest its progress.

Suddenly the Huron checked the canoe with such quickness that the water dashed in at the stern, and catching a branch above, he bent his own head down so low that it could not be seen from the outside. The listening fugitives heard nothing, but twice they saw their guide peer over the side of the boat, and then, letting go his hold, permit the canoe to drop down-stream.

Several times the same maneuver was repeated, when, raising his head, he said, as he took the paddle in hand:

"Sit up—no Shawnee now."

"Where have they gone?" queried Ferrington.

"Round in woods—huntin'—look good while, t'ink, 'fore find."

The old hunter was silent and moody, and Annie felt little disposition to join in the conversation, which was all between the Huron and the young man. As this was mostly unimportant, we shall give only what will interest the reader. The words of the Indian were spoken only at long intervals, he seeming to have an aversion to any conversation while using the paddle.

"Is no attempt to be made to get Hans Vanderbun out of his trouble?"

"No," replied Oonomoo. "Shawnee got him—purty nigh got us—git us if go back—let Dutchem be."

"It seems too bad to leave him alone. I would be willing to run considerable risk to help him."

"Oonomoo won't run risk."

"If I mistake not, there is little friendship between you and him?"

"Made Oonomoo drunk—make hog of Huron warrior."

"That explains your feelings toward him. I can blame you little for it. How was it, Oonomoo, you found the canoe when it was so well concealed?"

"Knowed place—been dere afore—t'ought be dere."

"We fancied our concealment was so well chosen, that even you could not find it, but I have about given up the belief that any human being possesses the power to deceive you."

The Huron seemed not to hear this compliment, so indifferent was his manner. He occasionally dipped the paddle in the water, looking constantly from one shore to the other, and

never once glancing in the face of either of the fugitives before him. He spoke with such reluctance that more than once Ferrington was compelled to repeat his questions.

"How much further are we going in the canoe?" he ventured.

"Wait—mebbe see," replied the Indian, impatiently.

Our hero accepted this hint to maintain silence, and did not question his companion further until well assured that he would be willingly answered.

They had descended the creek about the third of a mile, when Oonomoo sheered the canoe in to shore, and said :

"Git out now—walk rest de way."

"Where to? The settlement?"

"If Shawnee don't catch us."

The canoe was pulled up on the bank, and taking a blanket from it the Huron plunged fearlessly into the wood, following a direction nearly north-east. In the labyrinths of these solemn primeval forests, he was as much at home as was the hunter in his own cabin, and not the least hesitation or uncertainty marked his footsteps. Several times he paused and listened for a few seconds, but no sound save the faint murmur of the night-wind disturbed the profound silence that reigned around them. After journeying an hour or more, he halted and asked :

"Much tired?"

"I am not," replied Stanton, "but I fear Annie, here, must be."

"Much tired?" repeated Oonomoo, looking at her.

"I do feel weary," she replied, leaning heavily upon her father's arm as she spoke, "but if there be need of hurrying, do not let me hinder you."

"No need—good gal—Oonomoo like her—stop, rest."

"I suppose we are clear of *that* party of Shawnees at least," said Ferrington, "and can afford to stop without danger."

"Yeh—dey gone—nebber see us agin."

It being the autumn of the year, the nights were cold enough to make a fire absolutely necessary for comfort, and the Huron did not hesitate to start one upon the present occasion. He gallantly yielded his blanket, which he had brought from the canoe, to Annie, who was so wearied and exhausted

that she had scarcely reclined upon it when she was sound asleep. Ferrington and Stanton were not long in following suit, while Oonomoo remained to keep guard through the night.

When the beautiful morning of the Indian summer again broke upon the forest, the fugitives were astir, and with light hearts, pursuing their journey. The rifle of Stanton brought down a turkey, which furnished an excellent and nourishing meal much needed by all. The same manner of traveling was still maintained, the Huron taking the lead, and acting as the guide in all things.

An hour or more after daylight, as they were sauntering rather carelessly along, Oonomoo suddenly raised his hand for those behind him to halt. He had scented danger again, where danger was to be always apprehended.

"What is it?" ventured Ferrington, who was disposed to exhibit some impatience at this repeated interruption to their progress.

"Keep mouth shut—wait till see," replied Oonomoo, stooping down and laying his ear to the ground. "Some one walkin' t'rough de wood," he added, as he rose up. "Wait here till come back."

He moved carefully forward as he spoke. He had indeed heard the tramp of feet now audibly approaching. His woodcraft told him that it was the sound of white men; and he, therefore, exercised less caution as he came nearer and nearer to them. All at once he caught the glimpse of them through the trees, and stepping forward, showed himself to them.

"Hello, Tom, here's an Injin, as sure as we're alive! Let's have his scalp!" exclaimed the one who appeared to be the leader.

They rushed forward and laid hands on the Huron, who passively yielded himself to them.

"By thunder! look at the scalps hanging at his waist!" added another. "I say, boys, he's an old chick. Won't we make him take it for them?"

"I say, old copper-skin," called out the leader, "do you know any thing of a family named Stanton—an old man and his gal—bootiful creature, too? A young feller named Ferrington was with them, and a Dutchman named Hans Vanderbum, too."

The Huron nodded his head, to signify that he did.

"You do, eh? What do you know about 'em? S'pose you helped scalp 'em, didn't you? We're out looking for 'em, for we know they've been in a pretty tight place. What do you know about 'em, eh?"

"In de wood, close by; come wid me."

"The deuce! I say—"

"Hold on!" interrupted one of the men, pressing forward. "Don't you know that Injin? He ain't a Shawnee; he's Oonomoo, a Huron—one of the best friends we've got."

The others gazed at him a moment, and at length the leader said:

"He may be a good friend. He just said the folks we're after was here in the wood with him. Let 'im fetch 'em out, and then we'll believe it. Where might they be, my greasy friend?"

"Come wid me—me show you," replied Oonomoo, starting to move away.

"No you don't," retorted the leader, catching him by the arm. "You don't get us into any of your d—d ambushes. I'll trust a red-skin as far as I can see him, and no further."

"How are you going to manage it, then?" queried the one who had recognized Oonomoo. "Let him go, I will answer for his honesty and faithfulness."

"No, sir; he's got to signal for 'em. I don't let him git out my reach till I sees them that we're looking for."

At this juncture Stanton, who had overheard the loud voices of the men, made his appearance, followed by his daughter and Ferrington. There were six villagers in the party. Instantly recognizing the old hunter, they greeted him warmly.

"We've been out sarching for you," said the leader. "We've been to the cabin and found it gutted, and you gone; so we started on a tramp after you."

"The settlement!—has it not been attacked?"

"Attacked? I should rather think it had. You ought to see the bullets laying around promiscuously there. We've had a hard fight; but, thanks to the timely warning of the young man there, the Shawnees found us ready for 'em, and they's

glad enough to take to the woods, carrying their dead and wounded with 'em."

"Were none of the villagers killed?"

"Only one; five or six are pretty badly hurt, though."

"How was it that you came to our assistance?"

"We knewed the cowardly dogs would pay you a visit, and take revenge for our defeating them. We'd settled their hash so nicely, that we thought we could afford to come out and help you do the same thing. Where's the Dutchman, Hans Vanderbum?"

"He is a prisoner with the Shawnees."

"Small loss, any ways. How did you give the Shawnees the slip?"

"Under heaven, our safety is owing to that noble-hearted Huron standing there, who has repeatedly risked his life to save us."

"I axes pardon," said the leader, doffing his hat, and making a low obeisance to the stolid Indian. "I tuk you for one of the ornery kind of red-skins. I axes pardon."

The Huron, hardly understanding the meaning of the grimaces and motions of the backwoodsman, maintained a dignified silence.

"If there's no further business afore this meeting," pursued the leader, "I propose we strike a bee-line for the settlement."

The march was resumed, and an hour later the whole party arrived at the village, where, as may be supposed, they were gladly received by their friends, who hardly dared to hope they had escaped the vengeance of the infuriated Shawnees. We say all the party, but we should except Oonomoo, the Huron. He was suddenly missed when they were fairly within the settlement. He had stolen silently away, unobserved, and no one of that company ever saw him again.

It was Indian summer again. Two years had elapsed since the incidents recorded in the preceding pages. Meanwhile the indomitable Anthony Wayne had fought his memorable battle with the combined forces of the Wyandots or Hurons, Miamis, Pottawatomies, Delawares, Shawnees, Chippewas and Ottawas, and broke their power forever. Peace again reigned

along the frontier—not a fitful, momentary peace, but one that lasted for many long years.

It is to the HUNTER'S CABIN, where our story opened, that we would again take the reader. The clearing that surrounded it has been greatly enlarged, and gives evidence that some enterprising hand is at work. A neat fence incloses it, more to protect it from domestic than from wild animals, for the pleasant tinkle of several cow-bells is heard from the region of the brook that flows through the woods. At one end of the clearing a couple of men are seen busily employed, whom a glance would satisfy the reader were our old friends, Stanton and Ferrington, two years having made no perceptible difference in their appearance. As they toil they chat pleasantly, for they are both contented and happy men.

The door of the cabin stands open, for there are now no fears of hostile Indians, and the sweet voice of the housewife, as she moves about, is borne for a long distance on the still autumn air. In a cradle in the center of the room slumbers an infant. The fond glances that are given tell more plainly than could words, the relation of mother and her first-born. After a time, the wife draws her wheel to the door, and sitting down by it, is soon busily employed, for the hands of a loving wife are never idle, and the monotonous hum of the whirring wheel is a pleasant accompaniment to her sweet voice.

As the long, hazy afternoon drew to a close, and the tinkling cow-bells came nearer and nearer the house, and the hum of the wheel grew soft and low, the two men laid aside their implements of labor and sauntered leisurely toward the cabin. First bathing in the cool, sparkling water of the brook, they entered and took their seat. At this instant Annie ceased her spinning, and, looking about her with an odd expression, asked :

“Have you been smoking, George?”

“Smoking? What a question! certainly not.”

“Nor you, father?”

“Why, child, what put such an idea as that in your head.”

“I certainly smell tobacco.”

“And I am sure I do,” added Ferrington, snuffing the air.

It comes in the door, too. There certainly must be some one outside.”

As he spoke, he arose and walked to the door, and almost immediately exclaimed :

"I declare, here is Hans Vanderbum. Why, how do you do, Hans? Walk in; there are others here who will be glad to see you."

And the next moment our old friend entered the room. He appeared precisely as he had two years before. Instead of his old meerschaum, he had a beautifully-ornamented pipe in his mouth, which, perhaps for old acquaintance sake, he did not remove when he came in the house. Stanton and Annie greeted him kindly, and he seemed in the best of humors. Suddenly espying the cradle, he straightened himself, raised up his head, and peered in.

"Where te tuyvel did you got him?" he asked, turning to Ferrington. "Does he pelongs in *dis* house?"

"Certainly he does," laughed the proud father. "He is mine and Annie's. We have been married a couple of years, and certainly have a right to possess such an article in the household."

"Yaw, dat's so," nodded Hans, not displeased in the least. "I've got *two* of dem t'ings!"

"Got two of them!" exclaimed husband and wife together. "And are you married, too?"

"Yaw; been married dwo years. Shplendid wife, too."

"Who might she be?"

"Shplendid gal," repeated Hans; "we've got settled down now. You know te Injin dat cotched me when I shneezed so loud?"

"I understood that you were captured."

"Mine vrow is his sishter."

"Ah! an Indian wife, then?"

"Yaw, shplendid gal; she splits te wood, hoes te corn, does *every* thing," added Hans, in a glow of admiration, "except what I does."

"And what is that?"

"I sits in de cabin and does de shmoking, and shpanks te pappooses when dey dishturbs me."

"You are contented and pleased, then?"

"Yaw. I must go now."

"Please remain with us over night. You must do that

certainly, for old friendship's sake," said Annie, in which she was joined by her father and husband.

"Can't," said Hans, with palpable signs of fear. "Keewaygooshturkumkankangewock doesn't like me to be out late at night. She and some of te folks am out in te woods. We're moving."

"Who is she? Your wife?"

"Did you mean Keewaygooshturkumkankangewock? Yaw, she's my frow. Shplendid name, I t'inks, dat Keewaygooshturkumkankangewock ish, don't you?"

"Yes; rather long, however."

"Good-by," he said, shaking hands all around; and smoking his pipe, he went out the door and disappeared in the woods.

And the door of the HUNTER'S CABIN was closed, for the twilight of the Indian summer was deepening into night.

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